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Printed for J. Darby, A. Bettelworth, F. Fayram, J. Osborn, T. Long,
J. Pemberton, C. Rivington, J. Hooke, F. Clay, J. Badley and E. Symon

R. Howell (L)

A COMPLEAT
HISTORY
OF
The Holy Bible,

Contain'd in the
Old and New Testament :

In which are insert'd the OCCURRENCES that
happen'd during the Space of about

FOUR HUNDRED YEARS,

From the DAYS of the

PROPHET MALACHI

To the BIRTH of our

BLESSED SAVIOUR,

And that have been omitted in all or most of the
former WORKS of this Nature.

THE

Whole illustrated with NOTES, explaining several difficult
TEXTS, and reconciling many seeming CONTRADICTIONS in the
Translations, as well ENGLISH as others, of the SACRED SCRIPTURES.

Adorn'd with above 150 Cuts, engraven by J. STURT.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

By LAURENCE HOWEL, A. M.

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M DCC. XXIX.



THE
P R O E M
TO THE
OLD TESTAMENT.



THE holy Scriptures for their Antiquity, Dignity, and other Excellencies, far outshining all the Writings of the Ancients, I take it to be not only proper to our present Purpose, but useful to the Reader to say something of them. Indeed, if we consider how many Centuries have passed since some of them were first compiled, and how miraculously they have been preserved and transmitted to these Times, they may from hence alone be said to be the immediate Book of God; which, out of his great Care, he hath provided for us, that in them we may see his Will, and from thence learn our Duty. Next to this, we are to esteem and value the holy Scriptures, as containing in them all manner of Knowledge that is useful and entertaining. Would you know whence natural Philosophy, with Astronomy and other Appendages on it are said to derive their Original? See in the Books of *Genesis*, *Job*, and *Ecclesiastes*. What Books abound more in Ethicks or moral Precepts,

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than the sacred and sententious *Proverbs*, and *Wisdom of Solomon*? What more certain, regular, or pleasant History and Chronology, diversified with such Variety of Narration, can we find, than in *Genesis*, *Exodus*, *Joshua*, *Judges*? &c. How free from Sophistry are the holy Scriptures, and how solid and logical are all the Arguments used in them? Geometry plainly appears in the Building of the Tabernacle; and the working in Metals and Wood was known long before the Building of *Solomon's Temple*. In short, all manner of Learning, Languages, Arts and Sciences, are comprehended within those sacred Pages. The Texture of them indeed is so exactly dispos'd by the holy Ghost, that they are a Magazine accommodated to all Places, Times and Persons in the greatest Emergencies. So that *S. Basil* justly calls them a *Pharmacopy* well stock'd with Medicines, for all Uses and Necessities. From hence, in Time of Persecution, the Martyrs drew Constancy and Courage. From hence, in Time of Peace and Religion, the Learned gain'd Wisdom and Eloquence. In Times of Heresy they furnish'd the Orthodox with Stabiliment of Faith, and assisted them in the Subversion of Error. From hence in Prosperity we learn Humility and Modesty; in Adversity, Magnanimity and Patience. In Trepidity it arms us with an honest Zeal; and, finally, if thro' Length of Time, or Neglect, Abuses insinuate into Discipline and corrupt our Morals, nothing but the Rule of God's Word can restore Religion to its pristine State and Dignity; for that alone is the Standard of our Thoughts, and Guide of our Actions.

But we need no other Recommendation of these sacred Writings, than that of our Blessed Saviour, who hath commanded us to search the Scriptures. And in pious Obedience to his Precept, the Apostles and Fathers of the Church (too many here to be inserted) have made it their great Concern and Care for the good of Mankind, to exhort all Men to the Study of them. The Old Testament is indeed in it self a System of all kind of Knowledge
useful

useful for the Conduct of human Life ; and from which the Philosophers and Legislators of all Ages drew the choicest of their Observations. The Church hath borrowed much from that admirable Polity in the Acts and Laws of *Moses*, both Judicial and Ceremonial ; and the Authors of both Canon and Civil Law have from thence derived their most useful and advantageous Institutions. But the Excellency of sacred History will more evidently appear, if by a just Antithesis we compare it to the Accounts of the best and most ancient Heathen Writers, both Philosophers and Historians. How obscure and trifling are their Stories of *Deucalion's Flood*, of *Prometheus* and *Hercules*, and their general Notions of the World's existing from Eternity ? In short, all profane Story is stuff'd with Obscurity and fabulous Antiquity before the ^a *Olympiads*, which was their first certain Period of Time, and which did not commence till many Centuries after the Legislator *Moses* had written the Pentateuch ; so that from the first 3000 Years of the World and more, we have no certain History to depend upon, but this of *Moses* and the *Hebrews*. And, indeed, if we pay that just Deference and Esteem to it, which we ought, we shall find it the truest Light and Guide we can choose in the Transactions of Life. There only we have the true Account of the Rise and Fall, of the Virtues and Vices of the most early Kingdoms and States of the World ; and by their Example, either in Felicity or Infelicity, learn to be wise and happy. If we compare the *Greek* and *Roman* Historians with the Pentateuch and the rest of the sacred History, we shall find the latter to abound with the more illustrious Exemplars of heroic Virtue. *Rome* may boast of her *Torquatus*, and *Brutus*, who, in a more brutal than generous Bravery, sacrificed their Sons to the publick Good : But who would not rather admire the religious Obedience of pious *Abraham*, who had destin'd

^a *Olympiads*. This is the first and most certain stated Epoch of the Heathens, which was in or near the Year of the World, 3174. Tho' Chronologers begin another long before, which they date from the Destruction of *Troy*, which is said to be in the Year of the World, 2767. but it is very uncertain in respect of that of the *Olympiads*.

his innocent and only Son *Isaac* a Victim to the Will of God? Historians and Poets may in exalted Strains applaud the Courage of the *Horatii* and other Champions, who in Defence of their Country slew their Enemies in single Fight: But how short do they come of the God-like *David*, who, tho' but a Stripling, incounter'd and slew that vast Tower of Flesh, the monstrous *Goliath*, and by his Death path'd out an easy Victory to the *Israelites* over the *Philistines*? *Alexander's* Virtue is worthy of Praise, who, when he had conquer'd *Darius*, would not give himself the Pleasure of surveying his beautiful Captives, lest he should be tempted to Desire: But what is this to the Continence of *Joseph*, who fled from the actual Sollicitations of his lascivious Mistress into a loathsom Dungeon? They may praise *Lucretia*, revenging her violated Chastity by her own Murder; whilst the Holy Scriptures more deservedly extol *Susanna*, who expos'd herself to Death by shunning the lustful Imbraces of the two wicked Elders. They may talk of the Fortitude and Success of their warlike-Heroes, their *Cæsars*, *Pompeys*, *Scipios*, *Hannibal*, and *Alexander*; but how much more illustrious are the Examples of *Moses*, *Joshua*, *Sampson*, *Gideon*, *David* and *Saul*? who inspir'd with more than human Courage, with a handful of Men, in comparison of their Enemies vast Numbers, trampled them under Foot; and to facilitate whose Conquests the very Elements conspir'd, and fought on their Side.

I could carry this Antithesis much farther: But let it suffice, that these are the Patterns we ought to imitate, and in a virtuous Emulation study to arrive at their Perfections, that being thus stimulated on to the Pursuit of Innocence and Holiness of Life, we may, in an evangelical Sense, become terrestrial Angels, and heavenly Men; which will intitle us to the more immediate Protection of God, who, if we, by conversing with and reading these holy Writings, endeavour to imitate the Virtues of these godly Heroes, will give us their Rewards. And we may be assured, that whilst we thus make the Holy Scriptures

ptures our Study, they will arm us against all Terrors and Temptations that shall oppose or impede us in the Prosecution of our Duty, and furnish us with such Consolation, Hope, and Courage in all Conditions of Life, that knowing our selves to be the Care of God, we shall despise Torments and Death in their most frightful Aspect. This the great Apostle in his Epistle to the *Hebrews* labours very accurately to prove thro' the whole eleventh Chapter, inculcating the great Trials of the Saints under the Old Testament, who persisted in their Duty under the greatest Severities and Sufferings.

1. But besides these general Advantages of the Old Testament, there are some more peculiar to it; the first of which is, that the New Testament cannot be understood without it. The Apostles in their Writings often cite it, and more often allude to it; and our Blessed Lord taking his last leave of his Disciples, tells them; "These are the Words which I spake unto you, whilst I was still with you; that all must be fulfilled, which was written of me in the Law of *Moses*, and in the Prophets, and in the *Psalms*," *Luke xxiv. 44.* And if we consider the whole Epistle to the *Hebrews* without regard to the Old Testament, it will be the most intricate and obscure Writing that ever was penned; for it is so interwoven with it, that unless we refer to one, the other is altogether unintelligible.

2. Christ being the End of the Law, all things which are spoken of in the Old Testament, relate to Christ and his Servants, as well in a literal as an allegorical Sense: And in this the Old Testament excels the New; for the Old wants neither, but the New for the most part wants the allegorical Meaning. "Our Fathers, saith *St. Paul*,
 "were all under this Cloud, and all passed thro' the Sea,
 "and were all baptized unto *Moses*, and in that Cloud,
 "and that Sea; and did all eat the same spiritual Food,
 "and did all drink the same spiritual Drink; for they
 "drank of the spiritual Rock that followed them, and
 "that Rock was Christ, &c. Now all these things were

“Types unto them, and were written to admonish us,
 “upon whom the Ends of the World are come,” 1 Cor.
 x. 1, 2, 3, 4, 11. And from hence the same Apostle shews
 us, that the understanding of the Old Testament was
 transmitted from the *Jews* to us. “Therefore their
 “Minds are hardened, for until this Day remaineth the
 “same covering untaken away in the reading of the Old
 “Testament, which Veil in Christ is put away. But
 “even unto this Day, when *Moses* is read, the Veil
 “is laid over their Hearts,” 2 Cor. iii. 14, 15.

3. Another great Advantage there is, that the Old
 Testament is a Magazine so well provided with Variety
 of Figures, Examples, Doctrine and sententious Oracles,
 not only relating to Faith, but to the Information of a
 good Life, that from thence we may plentifully furnish
 our selves with Arguments and Reasons on all honest
 Occasions. Thus our blessed Lord, by the Example of
Noah and *Lot's Wife*, stirs up the Slothful to Watch-
 fulness, *Luke* xvii. 27, 32. He threatens the obstinate
Jews with the Remembrance of *Sodom* and *Nineveh*, and
 the Queen of the *South*; and terrifies the uncharitable
 Rich with the Words of *Abraham* to *Dives* in Hell; *They*
have Moses and the Prophets, let them hear them, *Luke* xvi.
 29. St. *Paul*, as hath been before observ'd, says, *All these*
things were done to them for Examples to us, that we should
avoid those Judgments God had afflicted them with for their
Fornication, Idolatry, Murmuring, &c. For the holy Spi-
 rit of God, which was prescious to, and conscious of all
 Ages, hath so dispos'd the Holy Scriptures, that they are
 useful, not only to the *Jews*, but to Christians in all
 Times. Which *Tertullian* in his Book *De Cultu Fæmin.*
 c. 22. confirms; for there he says, “That there is no
 “Enunciation of the Holy Ghost, so particularly direct-
 “ed to any present Occasion, as not to be of Use and Ad-
 “vantage in general.” St. *Augustine* seems so pleas'd with
 the Harmony between the Old and New Testament, that
 towards the End of his thirteenth Book against *Fausus*,
 he says, “In Commemoration of our Faith, in Conso-
 “lation

“ lation of our Hope, and Exhortation of us to Charity,
 “ we read the Books of the Prophets and Apostles; be-
 “ twixt whom there is so exact an Harmony, that it is
 “ like the celestial Trumpet, which rouzes us from our
 “ sluggish Mortality to contend for the Palm of our hea-
 “ venly Calling.” And indeed they are so well adapted
 to each other, that their Resemblance and Affinity are as
 natural and near, as that of the Shadow to the Body. In
 fine, the Learned of all Ages have in all Causes, Councils
 and judicial Proceedings, found their great Interest and
 Advantage in consulting the Holy Scriptures. It was a
 Royal Expression indeed of *Robert King of Sicily to*
Franc. Petrarcha! “ I tell thee, my *Petrarcha*, those
 “ holy Letters are dearer to me than my Kingdom; and,
 “ were I under a Necessity of quitting one, it should be
 “ my Diadem.

4. The last Advantage I shall mention of the old Tes-
 tament is, That as it had the Honour to precede the
 New, so it gave Witness to it, as *St. John Baptist* did to
 Christ, both he, *Moses*, and the Prophets going before
 him to prepare the Way for him; to give Knowledge of
 Salvation to his People, to give Light to them that sat in
 Darkness and in the Shadow of Death, and to guide our
 Feet into the Way of Peace. In Cognisance or Confir-
 mation of which, *Moses* and *Elias* appear'd at the Trans-
 figuration of Christ on the Mount, bearing Witness of
 him, and speaking of his Departure, *Luke ix. 31*. Who,
 that had been ignorant of the Old Testament, would for-
 merly have believed Christ or his Gospel? How should a
Jew be converted and brought to Christ, but by the Ma-
 nuduction of *Moses* and the Prophets, who foretold his
 coming into the World, and the great occasion as well
 as manner of it? Indeed, so great is the Force and De-
 monstration of the Gospel-Truths, that comparing the
 Transactions of our Saviour's Life, with what was fore-
 told of them, none can doubt of the Completion of those
 Predictions in Him only. All which add still the greater
 Reverence to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, as be-
 ing

ing a Type or Prefiguration of the New. But none go so far in the Eulogies of *Moses* and the Law, as our Blessed Lord himself. "The Law was given by *Moses*, *John i.* "17. There is one that accuseth you, even *Moses*; had ye believed on him, ye would have believed on me; for he wrote of me: But if ye believe not his Writings, how shall ye believe my Words? *John v. 45, 46,* "47. Beginning at *Moses*, and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them all the Things which were written of him in the holy Scriptures. Likewise *Philip* finding *Nathaniel*, tells him, we have found him of whom *Moses* did write in the Law, and also the Prophets, *Jesus* the Son of *Joseph*, that was of *Nazareth*, *John i.* "45. Certainly, as *Tertullian* against *Marcion* often observes, the Harmony between the two Testaments, the Consent or Agreement between *Moses* and *Christ*, the Prophets and the Apostles, the Synagogue and the Church, must needs be a great Testimony of the Truth of *Christ* and his Gospel. Having said thus much of those incomparable Histories and other excellent things contain'd in the Old Testament, it may not be improper to say something of the Authors or Compilers of them. And first of *Moses*.

And here, considering the Dignity of that great and excellent Legislator and Historian, to whom God did the Honour of speaking Face to Face, it may seem almost a Presumption to give his Character. I shall only, in short, say this, that for some thousand of Years, the Sun did not behold his Fellow. He was from his Infancy brought up in a Court, where he received all the Advantages of a Royal Education, becoming the Son and intended Heir of a King. He was well skill'd in *Egyptian* Learning, conversing at Court till he was forty Years old: At which time, being divinely inspir'd, he withdrew from the Court of *Pharaoh*, and disdaining to be thought the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, he chose rather to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than injoy the Pleasures of a courtly sinful Life. Being forc'd to fly

to

to *Midian*, he undertook the poor Employment of feeding Sheep. In which time God appeared to him in the Bush, and gave him Commission to be Ruler and Leader of his People; wherein he shewed an admirable Conduct and Economy, leading an almost innumerable Multitude of obstinate headstrong People, thro' a torrid Desert for forty Years. They often disoblig'd him by their mutinous and ingrateful Carriage; yet like a true Father of his Country, he forgave them, and always interposed between them and their angry God, who, but for him, had often reveng'd himself upon them; and was hardly dissuaded from utterly extirpating them and their Name, and raising another Nation to *Moses* in their stead.

But if we inquire more particularly into the Abilities and Virtues of this excellent Person, we shall find him the greatest and most honoured Mortal that ever was born, till the Son of God condescended to bless the World in human Shape. He was Prophet, Prince and Poet. For the first we have his own Acknowledgment: "The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet like unto me, from among thy Brethren, *Deut. xviii. 15.*" For the second, God himself invested him with imperial Power, when he gave him Commission to deliver and govern his People, *Exod. iii. 10.* That he was a Poet, appears from those eleven *Psalms* intitled to him, from *Psal. lxxxix.* to *Psal. c.* Besides the many personal Favours God bestow'd upon this great Man, he was pleas'd to honour him with this particular Note of Distinction, that he was the most faithful of his Servants, to whom he would communicate his Will by express Words, *Numb. xii. 7, 8.* And indeed, if we consider the frequent Interviews between God and *Moses*, the Conveyance of the Law by him, and his daily conversing and pleading for the People in the Tabernacle, where God more immediately revealed himself, we may justly call him the Secretary of the Divine Wisdom; by whose Prayers more than by *Joshua's* Valour, *Amalek* was subdued.

† duced. I shall not need to advance his Character by enumerating his wondrous Works in *Egypt*, his miraculous Conduct of the *Israelites* thro' the *Red-Sea*, his furnishing them with Food from Heaven, his producing Water by a Miracle from Matter to which Nature had denied it, and his vindicating God's Honour and his own Reputation from the Calumnies of their Enemies by a just Execution on *Corah* and his Associates. Whoever examines the Administration of this great Man, he will find in it the most refin'd Polity and exact Œconomy, that ever adorn'd the Character of the most illustrious Legislator; for he had to do with a most obstinate, rebellious, and ingrateful People, and whom he govern'd with that Dexterity, that he always brought them to a Sense of their Duty. But in the Discharge of this Part of his high Office, his Love and Care of their Safety more eminently appear'd than all his other Perfections, not only in that Heat of Zeal, when he beg'd of God, rather to deprive him of the Injoyment of the promised Land, than deny it to his People; but in those pressing Instances and fervid Admonitions throughout the whole Book of *Deuteronomy*, wherein he calls God and Man, Heaven and Earth to Witness, that he may incline their Hearts to a strict and sacred Observance of the Law of God. Nor was his Humility the least Imbellishment of his Character; for tho' the *Israelites* had often provok'd him by their Clamours, Reproaches, and Apostacy, and sometimes threatened to stone him, unmov'd he beheld their Ingratitude, and instead of revenging himself by Threats and Punishments, he humbly address'd himself to God in their Behalf, to deprecate the Judgments they deserved. And for this Virtue God himself expressly distinguishes him with this Eulogy, "That he was the meekest Man upon Earth." And for the sake of this indearing Quality, *Moses* is thought by some, so to have recommended himself to God, that he admitted him to behold as much of the divine Essence as his human Nature was capable of seeing; with which more fond and aspiring Men were not fit

fit to be trusted. As to the Death of this illustrious Prophet and Prince, it was as wonderful as the great Transactions of his Life; for God himself paid him the funeral Honours, by burying him so secretly, that no man ever knew where his Sepulchre was.

But all that we have hitherto said comes far short of the sacred Eulogies of inspired Writers, who have celebrated the Memory of this great Legislator in most exalted Strains. Hear *Siracides*, *ch. xlv.* “ *Moses* was the beloved
 “ of God and Men, and his Remembrance is blessed.
 “ God made him like the glorious Saints, (the holy Patriarchs) and terrible to his Enemies. By his Words
 “ he caused Wonders to cease, and magnified him in the
 “ Sight of Kings (*viz.* of *Pharaoh*) concerning whom
 “ the Lord said to him, Behold, I have made thee a God
 “ to *Pharaoh*, (*Exod. vii. 1.*) giving him the Command of
 “ his People, and shewing him his Glory. He sanctified
 “ him with Faith and Meekness, and chose him out of all
 “ Men. He caused him to hear his Voice, and took him
 “ into the Cloud; he gave him the Commandments before his Face, even the Law of Life and Knowledge,
 “ that he might teach *Jacob* his Covenant, and *Israel*
 “ his Judgments.

Hear the great Apostle in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *ch. xi. 24.* “ By Faith *Moses*, when he was come to Age,
 “ refused to be called the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter,
 “ choosing rather to suffer Adversity with the People of
 “ God, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season;
 “ esteeming Rebuke for Christ's sake, greater than the
 “ Treasures of *Egypt*; for he had respect to the Reward.
 “ By Faith he forsook *Egypt*, not fearing the King's
 “ Displeasure, submitting with Patience, as he that saw
 “ him which was invisible. Thro' Faith he instituted the
 “ Passover and Effusion of Blood, lest he that slew the
 “ Firstborn should touch them. By Faith he pass'd thro'
 “ the *Red-Sea*, as on dry Land, which when the *Egyptians*
 “ attempted to do, they were swallowed up.

Hear St. *Stephen* the Protomartyr, *Acts vii. 22, 30,*
 35, 38.

35, 38. “ *Moses* was mighty in Word and Deed; to
 “ whom, in the Wilderness of Mount *Sina* an Angel ap-
 “ peared in a Flame of Fire in a Bush; him God sent for
 “ a Prince and a Deliverer, by the Hand of the Angel
 “ which appear’d to him in the Bush; he brought them
 “ out, doing Wonders and Miracles in the Land of *E-*
 “ *gypt*. This is he, that was in the Congregation, (the
 “ Church) in the Wilderness with the Angel, which
 “ spake to him in Mount *Sina*, and with our Fathers,
 “ who received the lively Oracles to give unto us.

Nor is the Testimony of the Fathers and later Writers
 in Commendation of *Moses* to be despis’d; who speak
 with the utmost Respect and Reverence of him. *Justin*
Martyr in his *Parænesis* to the *Gentiles* says, “ *Moses*
 “ wrote his History in *Hebrew*, before the Characters
 “ of *Greek* were found out, which *Cadmus* from the
 “ *Phœnicians* first discovered to the *Greeks*. Whence
 “ *Plato* in *Timæus* says, that the wise *Solon* returning
 “ from *Egypt*, told *Critias*, he had heard an *Egyptian*
 “ Priest, who said to him, O *Solon*, you *Greeks* are young
 “ Men in Learning and Discipline.” And a little after
 the same *Justin Martyr* says, out of *Diodorus*, that *Or-*
pheus, *Homer*, *Solon*, *Pythagoras*, *Plato*, and others,
 when they were in *Egypt*, alter’d their Minds concern-
 ing *Polytheism*; being instructed by the *Egyptians* (who
 had it from *Moses*) that there was but one God, who in
 the Beginning created Heaven and Earth. And lastly he
 affirms, that *Plato* learned from *Moses* the Being of a
 God, the Creation of Things, the divine Word, the Re-
 surrection of the Body, the Judgment and Punishment
 of the Wicked, the Reward of the Just, and the Holy
 Ghost; which he supposes to be the Soul of the World:
 But it is very certain, that *Plato* did not rightly under-
 stand *Moses*, when he distorted his Meaning to such ridi-
 culous Fancies, as led him into most egregious Errors.

St. Gregory Nazianzen in *Orat.* 22. calls *Moses*, “ The
 “ most illustrious Legislator, and most holy of Priests,
 “ who being taken into the Conversation of God, be-
 “ came a Spectator of the divine Secrets. St.

St. *Augustin* against *Faustus*, l. 22. c. 69. says, “ *Moses* was the most faithful Servant of God; humble in declining so weighty a Ministry; but dutiful in undertaking it; just in keeping, and resolute in executing it; vigilant in Government; smart in Justice; zealous in Love, and patient in Suffering, &c.

St. *Cyril* of *Alexandria*, in a handsome and well deduced Chronology, proves *Moses* to be before the most Ancient of the *Gentile* Heroes.

Constantine the Great, in his Oration, very elegantly sets forth the Worth and Dignity of *Moses*, *Euseb.* c. 17. “ Who, says he, can say enough in Honour of him, who reduc’d a People out of the greatest Confusion, into the most exact Order? Who by gentle Persuasions quieted their mutinous Spirits, and from a most servile Condition, brought them to the Injoyment of Liberty. Who, in Wisdom, so far excell’d all that were superior to him in Years, that he became the Standard of Knowledge, both in his own and succeeding Times, and a bright Example of moral Virtues to Heathens as well as *Hebrews*, especially to *Pythagoras* and *Plato*, who were zealous Emulators of his Continency.

St. *Ambrose*, l. 1. c. 2. de *Cain* & *Abel*, says, “ *Moses* was the Figure of that Preceptor that was to come, who should preach the Gospel, fulfil the *Old Testament*, build the *New*, and feed the People with celestial Aliment. Hence the Dignity of his human Condition is so highly advanc’d, that he is called by the Name of God: I have set Thee as a God to *Pharaoh*, *Exod.* vii. 1. (That is, I have given thee Authority to speak to him in my Name.) And indeed he became his Character; for he was Master of his Passions, not inclin’d to worldly Desires, but in Mind and Body endeavour’d to form himself after the Likeness of that Perfection of his God, as far as Nature would permit: And therefore we read quite differently of him, to what we do of others, who die thro’ some Defect of Nature; but with him it was otherwise; for notwithstanding his great
“ Age,

“ Age, he retain’d the Use of all his Faculties and Senses
 “ to the last, his Eyes not failing, nor his natural Force
 “ abated; but died according to the Word of the Lord.

I shall conclude this Character of *Moses* with what *Josephus*, *Eusebius* and others, in short, but very comprehensively, say of him; that among all the Traditions of the Ancients, and Opinions of the Moderns, and in all the Collections of *Jewish* and *Gentile* Historians, *Moses* appears to be the first Theologift, Philosopher, Poet and Historian in the World.

As to the Writers of the other Parts of the *Old Testament*, there is but little to be said; besides, confining my self chiefly to the Historical Part of it, I shall be the more brief, giving an Account only of those Books of the Holy Scripture, from whence the History is collected.

The first Catalogue of sacred Books was made by the *Jews*, but by whom is not certainly known. It is highly probable, it was by *Ezra*, who collected all the sacred Books of the *Old Testament*, and shewing the Collection to the *Jews*, it was received and approved by the whole Nation, as containing all the sacred Writings. *Josephus* says they had two and twenty Books, which contained all that related to the *Jewish* Nation, from the Beginning of the World till his Time.

The five Books written by *Moses* contain the History of near three thousand Years, from the Creation till his Death. The Prophets, who succeeded him, wrote in thirteen Books all that happened from his Death to the Reign of *Artaxerxes*, the Son of *Xerxes*, King of *Persia*. They had also four Books of Hymns and Songs. *Josephus* adds, That there were Books written from the time of *Artaxerxes* down to his Days; but there being no Prophet amongst them to write them, as there had been in former times, they were not esteemed sacred, nor the People obliged to read them.

It is not certain whether *Joshua* wrote the Book that goes by his Name; but it is very probable it was written by his Command, and very soon after his Death;
 for

for *Moses* had often, during his Administration, in which *Joshua* was Chief under him, order'd him to write the most remarkable Occurrences in a Book. It contained a History of about seventeen Years.

Some are of Opinion, that every Judge wrote, or caused to be written, what was transacted in his Days; and that all these Transactions were collected and put into one Book, either by *Samuel* or *Ezra*. The Book of *Judges* contains the History of three hundred Years and upwards, from the Death of *Joshua* to the Death of *Samson*. As for the Story of *Ruth*, it is certain she lived in the time of the Judges, probably under *Samgar*. The *Jews* made but one Book of this and *Judges*.

The four Books that follow, viz. two of *Samuel* and two of *Kings*, contain the History of near six hundred Years. The first Book of *Samuel* to the five and twentieth Chapter, was written by *Samuel* himself; the Prophets *Gad* and *Nathan* finish'd it, and wrote the Second Book of *Samuel*. The two Books of *Kings* were written by *Jeremiah* or *Ezra*.

The two Books of *Chronicles* were written after the four former. 'Tis generally believed they were written by *Ezra*, who collected them partly out of the other Books of the *Bible*, and partly out of the Papers which were yet extant in his Days, but lost since.

Ezra wrote that Book which is called by his Name; and contains the History of eighty two or eighty three Years, from the first Year of *Cyrus* to the twentieth of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*.

The Book of *Nehemiah* was certainly written by himself, and contains the History of about thirty one Years, from the Reign of *Artaxerxes* to the Beginning of the Reign of *Darius* called the Bastard.

The Time and Author of the Book of *Esther* are very uncertain. Some think it was written by *Ezra*, or *Joaachim* the Priest, the Grandson of *Josedec*. It is very reasonable to think, that the *Abasuerus* here mention'd must be *Darius* the Son of *Hystaspes*, because he reign'd

xviii *The PROEM to, &c.*

from *India* to *Ethiopia*; which excludes all the Kings before *Cambyfes*, and even *Cambyfes* himself, because he did not conquer *Egypt*. It is thought by some, that this Book of *Eſther* was written upon the Account of the *Jews* Feaſt of ^a *Purim*. By *Herodotus*'s ſaying, That *Darius* had a Wife, which he loved ſo paſſionately, that he ſet the Crown upon her Head, there is great Reaſon to believe, that *Ahaſuerus* muſt be this *Darius*.

As to the Story of *Job*, I have ſpoken at large in the Notes, which the Reader may conſult, but take this Hint by the Way. Some have queſtion'd the Truth of this Hiſtory; but *Job* being mention'd in *Holy Writ* with ſo much Applauſe, it would be a Fault to doubt it. In *Ezek. c. xiv. v. 14.* and in the general Epistle of *St. James, ch. v. v. 11.* The Time *Job* lived in is very hard to be known, as well as the Author. Some ſay, it was written by himſelf, others will have *Moses* to be the Author of it. Theſe are but Conjectures, and upon ſlight Grounds. It is generally believed, that *Job* lived before *Moses*,* and that his Miſeries beſel him, when the Children of *Iſrael* were in the Wilderneſs. Some are of Opinion, that he was deſcended of *Nabor*, *Abraham*'s Brother; others from *Eſau*, which laſt is moſt probable. In the thirty fixth of *Genefis* there is Mention made of one *Jobab* amongſt the Kings of *Edom*, which is almoſt the ſame with *Job*.

^a *Purim*. *Pur* is a *Persian* Word, and ſignifies a *Lot*, whence this Feaſt of the *Jews* is called *Purim*, or the Feaſt of *Lots*. It began on the fourteenth of the Month *Adar*, and continued till the end of the fifteenth, *Eſth. ix. 21.* It was inſtituted by *Mordecai*, in Remembrance of the *Jews* Delivery from *Haman*, before whom *Lots* were caſt Day by Day,

and Month by Month, for the Deſtruction of them. In theſe two Days they read the Hiſtory of *Eſther* in their Synagogues, and as often as they hear the Name of *Haman* mention'd, they do with their Fiſts and Hammers beat upon the Benches and Boards, as if they did knock upon *Haman*'s Head.

THE



T H E
P R E F A C E.



AFTER so long a Proem, I might reasonably be excused the Trouble of a Preface: But since there hath been such Variety of Attempts in Undertakings of this Nature, I think myself obliged to give the Reader some Account of the Occasion of Mine.

I have observ'd, that most of those that have publish'd the Historical Account of the Old or New Testament, have so interwoven the Mystery and their own Observations with the History, that both are very often confus'd, and neither answer the End. To avoid which Perplexity, I have carried on the Historical Part intirely by it self; and as I met with any thing worthy Observation, I have cast it into the Notes at the bottom of each Page. The *Sieur de Royamont's History of the Old and New Testament*, published by R. Blome, is an imperfect Account, the History being continually interrupted with Observations, which must needs distract the Sense, and take off the Pleasure of reading; besides there is no exact Series observ'd, for very often material Matter of Fact is left out. Elwood hath studiously corrected this Error in his Sacred History, which is indeed a worthy Series of Story, and well collected. But he has some Imperfections which sully the Beauty of his Design; for where he meets with a Fai-

lure in a Priest, he grows petulant, and vilifies the Office in the Man; and by sly Innuendoes ridicules the Ceremonies of the Church, as in page 228, line 13. Nor is he only blameable in this, but guilty of great Indecencies in the Story of Ruth, reflecting some Wantonnesses on the Characters of her and Naomi, both which the Holy Scriptures describe to be virtuous good People; and which all ought to acknowledge, since the Saviour of the World descended from Ruth. He is very ludicrous, unbecoming the Sacredness of the Subject, in many Places; particularly in the Plague of Lice on Pharaoh and his People, the Story of Samson's Foxes, and that of Esther. Nor is he to be excus'd for his Puritanical Manner of making unlawful Parallels between the Acts of former and latter Times; which are vastly wide of the Purposes of Sacred History.

The Design of Religion being to make us wise and good, to give us true Notions of God and our selves, and to persuade us of the Reasonableness of the Divine Commands, of the Advantages of living religiously, and of the Possibility, nay, and Easiness too of so doing; yet, since the World abounds with such as think the Practice of Religion altogether impossible; and with others that laugh at those Sacred Oracles, which contain the Will of God, as if they were the most silly and ridiculous Things imaginable; and though this is chiefly the Effect of their Ignorance, Laziness, and Love to Vice; yet it cannot be denied, but that the Negligence of Translators has given too much Occasion to it. I have therefore taken care, as far as lay in my Way, to correct many Oversights and Neglects in our Translation of the Bible; which too often furnish wicked Men with Excuses, and Libertines and Athiests with Matter of Jestings. It's certain, that one of the greatest Favours God could have conferred on Men, in a State of Misery and Ignorance, was, to inform them of their Duty, and teach them the Means of becoming happy: And therefore there is nothing more worthy of a reasonable Man, and especially of a Christian, than to apply himself to the right understanding of those Things which are revealed in the Holy Scriptures, since they have been

been written for this very End. To be careless or negligent then, in a Matter of such high Concern, is criminal, and cannot but be look'd upon as an undoubted Mark of Irreligion and Profaneness. How uneasy is the most learned and ingenious Part of Men to suffer the least Fault or Obscurity in any Greek or Roman Author? How sedulous in turning over Volumes to find the true Reading and Sense of one Word in Homer or Virgil? Must it not then argue great Indifference or Disrespect for the Sacred Books, to let the Versions of them pass misrepresented or uncorrected? And how advantageous a Thing is it, when, by making a Text plain and intelligible, it shall overturn any of the pretended Grounds of Atheism and Infidelity, of dangerous Error, superstitious Foppery, or foolish and ridiculous Whim? This, I dare confidently affirm, the Reader will find made good in many Places of the following Sheets.

It is very much to be feared, that many Men have been more zealous than curious in Religious Matters; otherwise they would not have overlooked, or consented to so many and material Mistakes in our Translation of the Bible. Of these, what fell in the Way of History, (to which Part I confine myself) the Reader will find corrected and explained: And in this, to name no others, I have chiefly follow'd the ingenious Author of the Essay towards a new Translation of the Bible. It is a World of learned Observations; and which I humbly recommend to all Men, but more especially to our young Divines: For, besides that it renders many Places of Scripture more truly and clearly than they have been formerly express'd by any Version, it discovers the Sources and Causes of the Errors and Mistakes which are to be found in all Versions, and furnishes us with plain and easy Rules, by which Persons of the meanest Capacity may observe the most material Faults of all Translations.

It would be more amusing than beneficial to give the Reader a Catalogue of the Helps I have made use of in this Undertaking; let it suffice, that I have had Recourse to the best Interpreters, Criticks and Commentators. I have in the main forborne the Chronology; in which Interpreters very

very much differ, particularly the French; of whom Elwood seems to be mighty fond: For Du Pin is extremely mistaken in the Time of Nebuchadnezzar's destroying Jerusalem, and the Captivity that thereupon insu'd; and the Sieur de Royamont in the Time of Belshazzar's Reign; not to name any more. Nor do they vary in this only, but in Matter of Fact, if we compare them with Josephus, Ruffinus, and others of good Authority.

Confining my self (as I have said before) to what is Historical, I have touch'd only those Passages in the Prophets which relate to the History, that I might not break in upon, or discontinue the Series of Time and Action.

I have inserted those Historical Passages of the Apocrypha, which the Jews esteem'd true History, tho' they did not place them among their Canonical Books: And since our Church hath allow'd them as Truths, and appointed them to be read, I have ranged them in their proper Order, tho' some reject them as Incertainties.

From the Time of Malachi to our Saviour, there is a Chasm of about four hundred Years, which, to make the History intire and compleat, I have fill'd up out of the best Authors that wrote of those Times, as the Reader will see.

I have already in the Proem to the History of the Four Gospels spoken at large of the Writers of it, and their Authority. I shall only here give my Reasons for connecting them into one Story.

*The God of Truth, willing to acquaint us with what is of the highest Concern, hath provided his Spirit to enlighten our Understanding, his Son and Ministry the Means to convey it, and his written Word to bring those Things, which were done many Ages before our Time, and in Places far distant from us, so near, as if we had seen them acted before our Eyes, Gal. iii. 1. To this End our Blessed Saviour did chuse from among the Jews certain Men, which had known his Life and Doctrine from the Beginning, Luke i. 2. to be Witnesses to the Jews and Gentiles; and selected two from among his Apostles, and from his Disciples other two, to commit them to Writing, and transmit them to Posterity: That if in
other*

other Cases the Witness of two or three were sufficient, Deut. xvii. 6. and xix. 15. this of four might abundantly satisfy any that should doubt of that Truth, which in Times past did shine so bright among the Jews: Especially having receiv'd what they deliver'd, not only by their own Knowledge and Experience; but writing, as they spake, the Dictates of the Spirit of God, 2 Pet. i. 21. The Writings therefore of one of those, whom we call Evangelists, being the Testimony of the Holy Ghost, 2 Tim. iii. 16. is of more Value, and ought rather to be credited, than the Testimony of many, nay, of all Men: But all of them agreeing in one and the same Truth, their Testimony is so much the more enforcing, as implying so many several Acts of one and the same Spirit, producing in divers Subjects one and the same Effect, even the Mystery of our Salvation by Jesus Christ: For tho' every one of them follow his own peculiar Method and Order in the Context of his History, and sometimes deliver the same Thing in the same or other Words, or add some Circumstance to that which another had written, or new Matter altogether omitted by the rest, and now and then seem not so much to respect Order and Method, as faithfully to record Fact; yet in the undoubted Truth both of Christ's Speeches and Actions, there is a most admirable Consent and Celestial Harmony. For the more clear Demonstration of this, the Learned of all Ages have bestow'd much Labour and extraordinary Industry in comparing their Testimonies; as, Tatianus the Scholar of Justin Martyr, Ammonius Origen's Master, Theophilus Antiochenus, Epiphanius, Augustine, and others; not to name any more of later Date; by whose Labours in that kind the Church of God hath been much enlighten'd and adorn'd. Yet this, as it was perform'd by several Men, so was it done in a different manner. Some of them reduced all the four Evangelists into the Method and Text of one; the Manner of which appears by those Canons yet remaining and extant in St. Jerom, Tom. 6. in initio. Others placed the several Texts collaterally in one Page, leaving it to the Reader to judge what was added, or otherwise deliver'd by any one of them. And this Method
most

most of latter Times have follow'd, Calvin excepted, who harmonizeth only the three first, placing St. John by himself, as hardly reducible to the other three. Others have reduced all the four Gospels into one continued Text, bringing in every one in his due Place and own Words, delivering his Part of the History of Christ. This Method is observ'd by Jansenius and Chemnitius, both excellent in their Way: But that which I have chiefly follow'd, is the Itinerarium of the incomparable Lucas Brugensis, before his most learned Comment on the four Gospels; which being so harmoniously and exactly perform'd, I thought it most proper for my Rule and Guide.

The Advantage of this kind of Harmony of the four Gospels to the intelligent Reader will be infinitely greater than I can express; for he will find by this perpetual and continued Connexion of History the Speeches, Sermons and Acts of Christ, related without Interruption of Circumstances differently placed: And where the Circumstances of any Actions are omitted by one or two of the Evangelists, they are in this Method reduced to their proper Place, and the History carried on entire. There are many Places of the Evangelists, which seem to an inadvertent or prejudiced Reader to contradict one another; but by this Connexion are more commodiously reconciled, than by any Gloss whatsoever. And thus by the joint Consent of the four Gospels in one Testimony and Relation, the History of our Blessed Lord and Saviour, and the whole Foundation of Evangelical Truth and Doctrine appear more beautiful and illustrious: Of which God give us his Grace to make a right Use and true Improvement, for his Glory and our Benefit. Amen.



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GENESIS CHAP. I.

GOD divided the Light from the Darknes.



GENESIS 1. Verse 4, 5.

GOD divided the light from y^e darknes.
And GOD called the light Day, and the
darknes he called Night.

P 1.



A COMPLEAT
HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE.



BOOK I.



THE Almighty Architect having in his
Eternal Wisdom survey'd the *Chaos* in
its rude and shapeless Condition, shew'd
the first Instance of his Power in creat-
ing Light; for hitherto nothing but
Darkness over-spread the unform'd
Earth and Water, which with the other Elements and
Materials of the Creation lay blended together with-
out

out Order or Distinction; only the ^a Spirit of God moved upon the Face of the Waters. No sooner had the Light display'd its chearful Beams, but it gave Birth to the first Day, which was immediately succeeded by the first Night. And this was the first Day's Work of the great Creator; who was so pleased with the Operation of his Hands, that he gave it his sacred Approbation, distinguishing each with a new Name, calling the Light Day, and the Darknes Night.

And to keep so much of this Part of new-fram'd Nature within just Limits, the Almighty laid the Foundations of Heaven, call'd by the Name of ^b Firmament, which was to keep the Waters of the Clouds and those below them asunder.

As yet the Creation consisted of nothing but Light, the Waters and the Firmament that parted them; therefore God commanded that the Waters might be reduc'd within Bounds; upon the Retreat of which the dry Land appear'd, and this was called Earth, as the Gathering of the Waters was called Sea. This likewise received his gracious Probat; but being as yet irregular and uncultivate, he resolves to bestow upon it a prolifick Vertue as well as Ornament and Decoration: He no sooner gave the Word, but Nature covers the Earth with a beautiful Carpet of Flowers, Plants and Trees of all Sorts.

Hitherto the Light, which God created the first Day, (and without which the Order and Beauty of Things would have been altogether useless) was diffus'd throughout the Universe, by the Struggling of the small Globes of ethereal Matter, to break loose

^a *Spirit*. Thus our Translation; which ought to have been render'd a most vehement Wind, instead of the Spirit of God, since the Hebrew Word *Ruach* signifies as well the Wind as the Spirit, and this Signification of it agrees very well with Moses's Narration, which represents the Earth mix'd so with the Waters, that it could not appear, and so stood very much in need of a Wind to dry it. As the said

Moses observes, *Exod. xiv. 21.* that there arose a strong East Wind the Night before the Israelites pass'd thro' the Red-Sea, which made it dry.

^b *Firmament*. The Hebrew Word *Rakia* signifies Extension, and by it here Moses means that Extent of airy Matter, which incompasses the Earth, and separates the Clouds from the Waters that are upon the Earth.

from the Centre of their Vortexes; but on the fourth Day God made those two great Luminaries of Heaven, the Sun and Moon, one to rule the Day, and the other the Night; and to render them more useful, by the Regularity of their Motion, he appointed them for Signs to distinguish the Seasons, and by them divide Time into Days and Years. He made the Stars also, which he set in the Firmament, where they finish their Revolutions in their proper Periods of Time.

God having spent the first four Days in the Creation of inanimate Things, proceeded to that of Living Creatures, by giving a productive Quality, "Let the Waters, *says he*, bring forth abundantly the ^e moving Creature that hath Life, and ^d Fowl that may fly above the Earth in the open Firmament of Heaven." After this God created great ^e Whales, and all other living Creatures which the Waters produc'd, and gave them this Blessing, "be fruitful, and fill the Waters with Fish, and the Earth with Fowl." Moreover he added to the Fertility of the Earth, which before brought forth only Vegetables, the Production of Animals, saying, "Let the Earth bring forth the living Creature after its Kind; Cattle and creeping Things, and Beasts of the Earth after their Kinds; and it was so.

All these Parts of the Creation being thus finish'd in their admirable Order, the Almighty, to crown

^e *Moving.* Fish in *Gen. i. 20.* are not improperly call'd creeping Animals, tho' because they have no Feet, but lying upon their Bellies in the Water with the help of their Fins they row themselves along.

^d *Fowl.* From this Text of *Genesis* some have started an Opinion, that Fowl derive their Origin from the Water. And others from *Gen. ii. v. 19.* *Out of the Ground God formed every Beast of the Field, and every Fowl of the Air,* raise another, That Fowls take their Beginning from the Earth. These two Texts are easily reconcilable, for neither denies what

the other says, tho' they speak differently, as when *Moses* says. *Gen. i. 20. Let the Waters bring forth. &c. and Fowl,* he does not say that the Earth did not bring forth Fowl. It is most reasonable to think they had their Original partly from the Waters, and partly from the Earth; and this might render the Flesh of Fowls less gross than that of Beasts, and more firm than that of Fishes. Hence *Philo* calls Fowl the Kindred of Fish.

^e *Whales.* The Hebrew Word *Tanninim* signifies all vastly great Creatures, as well on Earth, as in the Water, and is commonly apply'd to all great Fishes.

this great Work, changes his Stile, which before was, Let this, or that be so, and says, Let us make Man in our own ^f Image, after our own Likeness: Which represents God as acting more immediately himself, and undertaking this excellent Piece of ^g Workmanship with some Sort of Reflection and Deliberation: And tho' the Matter out of which Man was formed was but the Dust of the Ground, yet God to shew his Omnipotence breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life, and Man became a living Soul. Man being thus excellently made was by God invested with the Two great Blessings of Fruitfulness and Dominion: *Be fruitful, says he, and multiply, and replenish the Earth, and subdue it, and have Dominion over it.* He constituted him Lord over all other Creatures, and gave him the Product of the whole Earth for his Sustenance and Pleasure.

Such was the Creation of the World, of which when God had taken a general Survey, he pronounc'd it very good. And on the ^h Seventh Day he ended all his Works, which Day he appointed to be kept

^f Image. Many of the ancient Fathers distinguish Image from Likeness in this Place; Image relating to his Nature, and Likeness to the divine Virtues.

^g Workmanship. See Ephes. ii. 10. and Act. xvii. 28.

^h Seventh. Interpreters are strangely puzzled with what our Translation, and some others, make Moses say in Gen. ii. 2. *And on the seventh Day God ended his Work, which he had made.* This Difficulty seem'd so material to the LXX, and to the Syrian and Samaritan Interpreters, that they put in the Number Six in the Place of the Seventh, *ἡ ἑβδόμη ἡμέρα*, and some, as Ludovicius, Capellus and Morinus, have made no Scruple to prefer their Version to the Hebrew Text. Others give the Words the several following Explications: viz. That God made the Seventh Day; that the seventh Day he communicated Motion and Action to the Things he had created the preceding Six Days. That the Seventh Day he knew

they were ended, and to add no more, that the Words should be render'd, *The Seventh Day he desired his Works*, i. e. heartily purposed to preserve them. Nor are others less unanimous. Some think that God gave the finishing Stroke to his Works on the Seventh Day, to prevent the too superstitious Observation of it. Others that the Words should be translated, *On the Seventh Day he rested from his Works*; but the Hebrew Verb cannot be so taken in this Place, as the Learned do know. Some imagine Eve was created the Seventh Day, contrary to the express Words of Moses, Gen. i. 27. Others understand the Seventh Day exclusive. It's strange, that so many Learned Men should have been so much puzzled with such a plain and easy Passage, which should be translated, *And the Seventh Day God had ended his Works, which he had made*; that is, that the Seventh Day there remained nothing to be made; ~~■~~ the greatest Masters of the Hebrew Tongue do acknowledge.

GENESIS CHAP. I.
Man is created in the Image of GOD.



GENESIS 1. Verse 27.
GOD created man in his own image,
in the image of GOD created he him, male
and female created he them.



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Book I. of the Holy Bible.

5

Holy, that Man might therein consider the Excellency of the Creation, and God's Goodness towards him; which he still enlarg'd by additional Bounties accommodate to the Use and Pleasure of Life. The first of which he express'd in his Choice of the most beautiful Spot of Ground, call'd the Garden of ⁱ *Eden*, or the Terrestrial Paradise; wherein God placed him, that he might cultivate and keep it, giving him a general Permission to eat the Fruit of every Tree in the Garden, even of the ^k Tree of Life, except of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil; giving him thereby an Occasion to shew his Fidelity to his Maker, and his Readiness to depend on him as his supreme Lord and only Benefactor; at the same Time to terrify him from Disobedience, he annexes a dreadful Penalty to the Transgression of this Precept: *In the Day*, says he, *that thou eatest thereof thou shalt deserve to* ⁱ *die without Remission.*

B 3

God

ⁱ *Eden.* The Part of the World in which this Garden was, is sufficiently denoted by the Rivers *Chiddebel* and *Perrath*, which are certainly the *Tygris* and *Euphrates*. The *Gehon* and *Pison* are not so well known; but since it is said, that these four Rivers united into one Channel in the Terrestrial Paradise, going out from thence form'd four several Branches, it must be allow'd that the *Gehon* and the *Pison* were in the same Part of the World, as the *Tygris* and the *Euphrates*; and it is very likely, that the earthly Paradise was about that Place, where those Rivers being united in one Body, afterwards divide into two Branches, which the Scripture calls *Gehon* and *Pison*, one of which runs into the Country of *Susiana*, which is the Land of *Chus*, and the other into the Land of *Havilah*, which is a Part of *Arabia the Stony*.

Our learned Countryman, Dr. Henry More, alleges that Paradise was about *Mesopotamia*, that Country being not far distant from *Judea*. For it is the Tradition of the Fathers, that *Adam*, when he was ejected out of Paradise, having travel'd over some Parts of the World, came at

last to *Judea*, and there died, and was buried in a Mount, which his Posterity, because the Head of the first Man was laid there, called *Mount Calvary*, where Christ was crucified for the Expiation of the Sins of *Adam*, the first Transgressor. If the Story be not true, (says Dr. MORE) it is pity but it should be, because it hath such venerable Assertors, as *Cyprian*, *Athanasius*, *Basil*, *Origen*, and others of the Fathers, as *Cornelius a Lapide* affirms.

^k *Tree.* Moses in *Gen. ii. 9.* mentions two Trees, the Tree of Life, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The Tree of Life, is suppos'd to be so called, because the Fruit of it had the Vertue of preserving from Death; by eating of which, Man was supply'd with continual youthful Vigour, till he should be translated from a corporal Life to a spiritual and immortal. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil had that Name, because after *Adam* and *Eve* had eaten of its Fruit, they began to know the Good they had lost thro' their Disobedience, and the Misery they were fallen into.

ⁱ *Die.* *Gen. ii. 17.* The Version runs thus ——— *Thou shalt die the Death:* Which

God having given *Adam* a Permission what to eat, and a Prohibition what to forbear, puts him in Execution of the Sovereignty he had before given him, bringing all the Beasts of the Field and Fowls of the Air before him, that he might give them their Names, and whatsoever *Adam* called any Creature, that was its Name. And now *Adam* being the only Creature that wanted a Companion, God caused a deep Sleep to seize on him, and whilst he slept, God took out one of his ^m Ribs closing up the Flesh again, and made it into a Woman and brought her to him. *Adam* being sensible of what his Maker had done, as soon as he saw the Woman, in a sort of Rapture says, *This is now Bone of my Bone, and Flesh of my Flesh*: And, as he had given Names to all other Creatures, he likewise calls her Woman, subjoining a Reason, because she was taken out of Man: These two then being such Relatives, were to be inseparable, and that in all future Ages, Man should leave Father and Mother, and incline wholly to his Wife, and they two be, as it were, but one. This was the divine Institution of Marriage, with the Law thereof, in the naked Innocency, and unblushing Simplicity of the Man and

Which would imply, that on the Day that *Adam* should eat of this Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, he should die; which was not so, for *Adam* lived many Years after. Therefore, as some observe very well, it should be render'd, *Thou shalt deserve to die without Remission*. For the Scripture often expresses by the Future not only what will come to pass, but also what ought to come to pass. And to this Purpose there is a very apposite Text, 1 Kings ii. 37. where *Solomon* says to *Shimei* ——— in the Day that thou goest out and passest the Brook Kidron, thou shalt assuredly die the Death; i. e. thou shalt deserve Death without Remission: For *Solomon* reserved to himself the Power of punishing him when he should think fit; and in effect he did not put him to Death the same Day in which he disobey'd, no more than God did put *Adam* to Death the same Day

that he did eat of the forbidden Fruit, ^m Ribs. The *Atheist* here is apt to raise Scruples and Difficulties, demanding whether this Rib of *Adam* was a superfluous one or not? How God made a Woman of a Rib? And why he did not make Woman at the same Time he made Man, as he created other Males and Females? These are frivolous *Queries*, but ought to be answered. Was it more difficult for him to form a Woman out of a Rib, which was covered with Flesh, than to make the Body of a Man, or a Beast, out of the Earth? We know not in what manner that was done, nor is it necessary we should know it. It is enough that Woman was form'd of the Substance of the Man's Body, and that such a Way of forming it was more agreeable than any other to God's Order and Wisdom.

his

Book I. of the Holy Bible.

7

his Wife, while they abode in the delightful Garden of *Eden*. This was the innocent State of our first Parents; tho' they were "naked they were not ashamed, for they had hitherto contracted no Guilt, their Conscience was an unspotted Tablet, no depraved Affections having invaded their chaste Souls; for before Sin entred, all Things were honest and comely.

But the blissful State of this happy Pair was but short liv'd; for the ° Serpent, the Chief of the fallen Angels, envying the Happiness of Man, who hitherto retain'd and enjoy'd that State of Innocence

° *Naked.* *Plato* in *Politic.* seems to make that *Nakedness*, which he attributes to the People of the Golden Age, from hence.

° *Serpent.* *Moses* in his Relation gives no account of the Creation or Fall of Angels, both Good and Bad. It's certain they were all created Good, as all Things else were that God had made. But that some of them kept not their first Estate, but left their own Habitations, and thro' Pride aspiring higher, sinned against God, and were by him cast down to Hell, is certain from the Apostles *St. Peter* and *Jude*, 2 *Pet.* ii. 4. *Jude* 6. to which some additional Light is given from *Job* iv. 18. *John* viii. 44. and 1 *John* iii. 8. The Chief of these fallen Angels, called here the *Serpent*, and afterwards the Old Serpent, *Rev.* xx. 2. and *Beelzebub* or Prince of the Devils (which were the rest of those Angels, that fell) was he that tempted *Eve*. Commentators indeed do vary much in their Opinions; some pretend that by the *Serpent* is to be understood the Devil, and that all which is said of the Discourse, and of the exterior Temptation, is to be understood of the inward Suggestion of *Satan*. Others say, the Devil took upon him the Shape of a Serpent; but both these Opinions seem opposite to the Words of *Moses*, who supposes that *Serpent* was one of the Animals of the Earth: The Punishment God inflicted on it of creeping on the Earth, and the Enmity between its Race and that of Women, are Particulars which do not agree with any, but the true and real *Serpent*. But suppos-

ing him to be a *Serpent*, some will allow him to have had the use of Speech and Understanding at first, of which for his Transgression he was depriv'd; with many other Conjectures to as little Purpose. *Abarbinal* the Learned *Jew* expounds the Temptation of the *Serpent* most ingenuously of any, and after a quite different Manner. He pretends that the *Serpent* did not speak, and that *Eve* said nothing to it, but that the said Animal being very active, got upon the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, took of the Fruit, and eat of it; and that *Eve*, having seen it several Times do so, and not die, concluded with her self, that the said Fruit did not occasion Death, and that it might be grateful to the Taste: And that it was thus the *Serpent* gave the Woman to understand, as if it had spoke, that she would not die for eating that Fruit, which made her believe, that God had only forbid them eating of it, because if they did so, they would have the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This Opinion indeed solves all Difficulties; and yet it must be own'd, that the Text seems to express more, and to insinuate, that there was a real Dialogue between the Woman and the *Serpent*. We must therefore return to the more general Opinion of the Expositors, that the Devil actually made use of the *Serpent* to talk to *Eve*, and tempt her. It was a real *Serpent*, and not an imaginary one that spoke to her; but it only spoke by Means of the Devil, who made use of that Creature as the fittest to be employ'd in that Service.

and Bliss, in which he was created, and which they by Ambition have forfeited and lost, contrived how to seduce Man from his Obedience, and draw him into Transgression, that he might have him a Companion in his Punishment. In order to which he attacks the Woman, as the weaker Vessel, by whom he thought he might more easily prevail upon the Man. His diabolical Project took; for he no sooner accosted her, but he gain'd his End: With a seeming Sort of Indifference he betrays her into an eager Pursuit of her Ruin. "Indeed, *says he*, God hath commanded you not to eat of every Tree of the Garden." Nay, *replies the Woman*, "it is but one Tree that is forbidden us; for we may eat of the Fruit of every Tree in the Garden, except of the Fruit of the Tree which is in the Midst of the Garden; for God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." God's Word was positive, which he made to *Adam*, *Thou shalt die*; but the Woman in repeating it, renders it only doubtful, and in doubting of God's Threatning, she seem'd to yield. The *Serpent* finding her staggering, pursues his Advantage, and encourages her with Assurance that she should not die; for God knows, *9* says he, that in the Day ye eat thereof, your Eyes shall be open'd, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil. That inflam'd the Woman's Ambition and Desire, for the Fruit was not only tempting to the Eye, and grateful to the

9 *Serpent*. *Moses* does not say expressly, the Devil made use of the *Serpent* to tempt *Eve*, but contents himself with relating Facts as they happened outwardly, without commenting on them or giving any Exposition; as in the eighteenth Chapter of *Genesis*, he calls the three Angels that appeared to *Abraham*, Men, without declaring that they were Angels. *St. Paul* 2 *Cor.* xi. 3. in the same manner assigns to the *Serpent* the Seducing of *Eve*; but in another Place

of the Scripture that Seducing is assign'd to the Devil.

9 *Says*. It hath been objected by some, that since the *Serpent* could not speak naturally, how it came to pass that *Eve* was not frighted when she heard it talk? To which it may be easily answer'd: 1. That *Eve* being but newly form'd, might not know that Animals did not speak. 2. That being hitherto in a State of Innocence, Sin having not as yet seiz'd them, she was not subject to fear.

Palate,

GENESIS CHAP. III. The fall of Adam and Eve.



GENESIS 3. Verse 6.

When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took etc. 8.

A circular ink stamp from the British Museum. The words "BRITISH" and "MUSEUM" are curved along the top and bottom inner edges of the circle, respectively. In the center of the stamp, the number "17NO71" is printed in a straight line. The stamp is slightly faded and appears to be on a piece of aged, textured paper.



Book I. of the Holy Bible.

Palate, but desirable for its instructive Quality of making one Wise. Whereupon forgetting the Prohibition, and dreadful Menaces attending, her Curiosity hurries her on to her Destruction: She eats of the Fruit; and her Husband, stimulated by the same Desire of being as knowing as his Maker, is easily persuaded by his Wife to taste of it with her. No sooner had they eaten of the forbidden Fruit, but their Eyes were open'd; but alas! it was to see their own Nakedness and Misery. They had indeed acquired Knowledge, but it was a Knowledge arising from sad Experience, that the Serpent had betray'd them both, and drawn them from the Good which they knew before, into the Evil which they knew not. This dear-bought Knowledge brought upon them at once both Guilt and Shame. *Moses* had before observ'd, that *Adam* and *Eve* were naked, and were not ashamed; before Sin was committed they were innocent and free from Passions, like Children which were not ashamed of their Nakedness; but after they had sinn'd, they began to feel the disorderly Motions of Concupiscence; they were ashamed to see themselves naked, and being put to the poor Shifts of Art to conceal their new-discover'd Nakedness, they made themselves Aprons to cover them. And now their Wo is increas'd by a sad Chain of Passions, which their disobedience had intail'd upon them; Guilt attended with Shame, and slavish Fear pursue them: For when they heard the Voice of God, walking in Paradise, when the Wind arose in the Afternoon, they hid themselves from the Face of the Lord among the Trees of the Garden. God at that Time was heard, and made himself known to Man after a sensible Manner: He call'd *Adam*, saying, Where art thou? Not to know where he was, but to make him more sensible of his Fault. *Adam* finding himself discover'd, in great Confusion was forc'd to answer, "I heard thy Voice in the Garden, " and was afraid, because I was naked, therefore I
" hid

“hid my self.” In confessing his Nakedness he own’d his Guilt; of which God immediately convicted him; for demanding how he came to know he was naked? (which God knew he could no way come to the Knowledge of, but by Eating of the forbidden Fruit.) *Adam*, who was not yet grown so hardy, as to deny the Fact, own’d himself guilty, but endeavour’d to excuse himself, by laying the Blame upon his Wife, not without a tacit Reflection on God himself: “The Woman, *said he*, whom thou gavest to be with me, gave me of the Fruit and I did eat.” God thereupon calling the Woman to account said, “What is this thou hast done?” She also readily confess’d the Fact; but, like her Husband, being willing to excuse her self, alledged, That she was betray’d into it; “The Serpent, *said she*, beguiled me and I did eat.” God having by Examination brought this unhappy Pair to Confession and Conviction, did not proceed so with the Serpent; but presently passing Sentence upon him, he said, “Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all Cattle, and above every Beast of the Field; upon thy Belly shalt thou go, and Dust shalt thou eat all the Days of thy Life. And I will put ^r Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed, it shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her Heel.” Then pronouncing Sentence on the Woman, God said, “I will greatly multiply thy Sorrow and Conception. In Sorrow shalt thou bring forth

^r *Enmity.* The Enmity here mentioned is that Antipathy which God set between Mankind and his Issue, and the Devil and his, at whose Instigation our first Parents were betray’d to Sin; By the Seed of the Woman, meaning Jesus the Saviour of the World, and the Faithful; and by the Seed of the Serpent (the Devil) all Infidels and wicked People; closing the Curse of the Serpent with the same Allegory. *It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt lie in*

wait for her Heel: i. e. O Devil, the Seed of the Woman shall use thee as a Serpent, tread thee under Foot; and thou, O Serpent, shalt, like thy self, lie in wait to bite its unwary Heel. Upon which the *Targum* or *Chaldee* paraphrase thus: *When the Sons (or Seed) of the Woman shall observe the Law, and its Precepts, then shall they trample on thy Head and kill thee; but when they shall forsake the Law, thou shalt bite their Heels:*

“Children,

"Children, and thy ^f Desire shall be to thy Husband, and he shall rule over thee." And unto *Adam* he said, "Because thou hast hearken'd unto the Voice of thy Wife (in Opposition to my Command) and hast eaten of the forbidden Tree; cursed be the Ground for thy sake; in Sorrow shalt thou eat of it, all the Days of thy Life. Thorns also and Thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the Herb of the Field. In the Sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat Bread, till thou return to the Ground out of which thou wast taken: For Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return." These three Criminals having receiv'd their Doom, God expell'd them the Garden of *Eden*, and sent the Man to till the Ground from whence he was taken; and lest he should have the same Desire of Tasting of the Tree of Life, as he had of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, God placed ^t Cherubims to guard the Entrance of Paradise with a flaming Sword, to preserve the Tree of Life from his profane Hands. And thus from the Fall of our first Parents proceeded all those Ills which defac'd these beautiful Works of their Creator; and hence Sin, Pain and Death were intail'd upon their Posterity. With guilty Shame they are forc'd to quit their Seat of Innocence, and exchange fair *Eden's* Garden for an uncultivated World, which produc'd nothing but what was the Effect of toilsome Labour, and where they had no other Prospect, but a sad Variety of Care and Trouble.

And now *Adam* being expell'd Paradise knew his Wife *Eve*, who conceiving bare him a Son, whom

^f *Desire*. Desire here signifies Obedience as to a Superior; that the Woman should desire nothing but what was agreeable to the Will of her Husband: And this is further inforc'd from *Gen.* iv. 7. where the Dignity of the First-born is given to *Cain* over *Abel* in the same Words, *unto thee his Desire shall be* (Subject) *and thou shalt rule over him*.

^t *Cherubims*. They are generally believ'd to be Angels; though the *Hebrew* Word may be taken for all Things in general that can strike a Terror, and the flaming Sword may be also taken metaphorically for Fire, Lightning, or any other Body, which by its Brightness hindred Men from approaching to Paradise.

she call'd "Cain, and said, "I have gotten a Man "from the "Lord." * After him she bare Adam another Son, who was named "Abel. These two Brethren, when they grew up, betook themselves to two different Employments; Cain, the Elder, whose Disposition was sordid and avaritious, betook himself to Tillage; but Abel, who was of a more gentle and humane Temper, took Delight in a pastoral Employment, and fed Sheep. In Process of Time each of them brought their Offering to the Lord. Cain's was the "Fruits of the Ground; and Abel's the Firstlings of his Flock, and the Fat of them. The Lord, who saw and regarded the Heart of each, accepted Abel's Sacrifice, but was not pleased with Cain's. Hereupon Cain was provok'd, which the falling of his Countenance plainly shew'd; upon which God expostulates with him, and gives him to understand that it was his own Fault, that his Offering had not been accepted, and that if he did well, he should be accepted; if he sinn'd, he should be punish'd for his Offence; but if he made good Use of the Instructions and Assurances which God had been pleased to give him, "Abel his

* Cain. The word Cain signifies Possession; for a Child is called *Parentum possessio & supellex*, a Possession or Chatel of his Parents.

* Lord. From this Expression some think, that Eve was so far mistaken in Cain, as to take him (who was indeed but the First-born in the Transgression) for that Seed, which God had said, should bruise the Head of the Serpent; but so far from being that Seed, or of that Seed, that the Apostle expressly says, *He was of that wicked one*, 1 John iii. 12. And some of the Jews stick not to say, That he was born of a filthy Seed, which the Serpent cast into Eve. But plain it is, that in reciting the Generations of Adam, Gen. v. Cain and his Offspring are wholly omitted, as if they did not belong to Adam.

* After. Before the Birth of Cain. Eve is said to have conceived; but there is no mention made of her Conception

of Abel; from whence some conclude they were Twins.

* Abel. The Word Abel signifies Mourning, because his Parents long lamented his Death: It signifies also Vanity, either because it presaged the Suddenness of his Death, or that it denoted the Vanity of Mortality to which all are subject.

* Fruits. It is the general Opinion of Commentators, that Cain offered the worst of the Fruits of the Earth, which shew'd, that he did not pay his Acknowledgment to God with that Cheerfulness and Sincerity of Heart, as Abel did who brought the First of his Flock.

* Abel. In the same Sense God said to Eve, that her desire should be to her Husband, i. e. she should go to him for Shelter and Protection, as to a Sanctuary, as the LXX. have very well render'd it,

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GENESIS CHAP. IV.

Cain slays his Brother Abel.



GENESIS 4. Verse 8.

And it came to pass when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and slew him.

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Brother should come to him as to a Refuge, and submit himself to his Authority. But this kind Reproof made no Impression on *Cain*; instead of being sensible of his Fault and repenting, he grows incens'd against his Brother, and taking Occasion not long after to discourse with him when they were together in the Field, he fell upon innocent *Abel* and slew him. This unnatural Murder gave Death the first Handsel, which proceeded from no other Ground, but that because the righteous *Abel* worshipp'd God more sincerely, and more acceptably than *Cain* did. But he is soon call'd to an Account for it, for God examining him where his Brother was, he very insolently as well as falsely answered, he knew not: And as if he had been affronted by being question'd about his Brother, he surlily answered, "Am I my Brother's Keeper?" But the Lord not only charg'd him with the Murder of his Brother, but convicted him of it too. "What hast thou done, said he, the Voice of thy Brother's Blood cries to me from the Ground? And now art thou cursed from the Earth, which hath opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand. When thou tillest the Ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee its Strength: Nor is that all; but a Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be upon the Earth." This Sentence was gentle in Comparison of the horrid Crime; but *Cain*, amaz'd at it, began to be sensible of the Heinousness of his Offence, and the Misery he was reduc'd to: ^b My Offence, said he, is too great to obtain Pardon. This was an Expression of Despair rather than Repentance;

^b *My Offence, &c.* All the Versions make *Cain* speak like one in Despair, Gen. iv. 13. The Vulgar Latin makes him say, *My Iniquity is greater than that I should merit or obtain Pardon.* Pagnine, Tremellius, the French, and Ours, *My Iniquity is greater than I can bear.* The former is the Meaning which the LXX, and Chaldee Paraphrase have given

it: But why should we not translate it with some Rabbins, *Is my Iniquity greater than that it can be pardon'd?* This hath nothing contrary to the Answer which God gave him, and which he likewise back'd with a miraculous Sign, to assure him of his Protection, as you may see in the Note ^d following.

and he seems not so sensible of his Sin as of his Punishment. "Behold, *said he*, thou hast driven me out this Day from the Face of the Earth, and from thy Face shall I be hid, and I shall be a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth, and it shall come to pass that every one that findeth me shall slay me." But God having taken this Cause into his own immediate Cognizance, and fix'd the Punishment, secur'd him against that Dread, declaring, that whosoever should slay Cain, Vengeance should be taken on him Sevenfold, that is, in a very grievous Manner. // God giving us thereby to understand, that Vengeance is to be left to him, and that it is not lawful for private Persons of their own Authority to kill such as deserve it. And that none by Mistake might slay Cain, God set a ^d Sign or Wonder

^c Every one. Among all the Conjectures of *Peirere* and others, concerning the State of the Pre-Adamites, there is but one that seems to have any Difficulty; which is, that Cain having slain his Brother *Abel*, and going away towards the East, said, *Every one that findeth me will slay me*. This seems to imply, That there were then Men upon the Earth. Cain married, he had a Son called *Enoch*, and being come into the East he there built a City, to which he gave his Son's Name. Hence they conclude that the Earth was inhabited by Men, and another Race of Men than that of *Adam*; for *Abel* was dead, Cain was fled, and *Seth* was not born till the 130th Year of *Adam*, after the Death of *Abel*. But this Objection hath little in it, if we observe, that the Murder of *Abel* by Cain happen'd long after their Birth, a short Time before that of *Seth*, who was born in the 130th Year of *Adam*; for *Eve* look'd upon the Birth of *Seth* as a Comfort for the Death of *Abel*, saying, *God hath appointed me another Son in the Room of Abel, whom Cain slew*. Supposing then that Murder to have happened in the 128th Year of the World, there might be then many Men on the Earth descended from *Adam*; for tho' the Scripture names but Three of his Children, yet it is said *Gen. v. 4.*

he had Sons and Daughters. If we calculate the Number of *Adam's* Children and their Offspring in 122 Years, it will appear there might be a great Number of Men and Women: So that it is not surprizing, that when Cain slew his Brother *Abel*, some other Part of the Earth should be peopled.

^d Sign. There is nothing more ridiculous than the Conjectures of the Rabbies, and of some Christian Doctors, concerning this pretended Mark, which they think God did imprint upon the Body of Cain, to distinguish him from other Men, and to keep him from being kill'd. Some imagine, that it was some of the Letters of the Name *Jehovah*, or of the Hebrew Alphabet, or even of the Name Cain, that were printed on his Forehead, or on his Arms. Others have fancied that it was a Horn, which grew out of his Forehead. Several of the Fathers, and some *Arabians* have thought it to be a continual Trembling of the Body. There are some, who imagine, that this Sign was a Dog that always attended him; others, that the Earth always shook about him: But supposing there had been a real Mark set upon some Part of Cain; yet since the Scripture gives no Account of what Mark it was, it is Rashness to guess at it. But the Mistake lies in the

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Wonder before him to persuade him, that whosoever should find him, should not kill him. Upon this *Cain* went out from the Presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the Land of *Nod*, which is to the Eastward of *Eden*, beyond the Country of *Babylon*; and having by this Time taken a Wife, she conceived and bare him a Son, called *Enoch*, after whose Name *Cain* called the City, which he afterwards built. This *Enoch* begat *Irad*; *Irad* begat *Mehujael*; *Mehujael* begat *Methusael*; and *Methusael* begat *Lamech*. This last the Scripture takes Notice of as a Thing altogether new and singular, that he was the First that introduc'd *Polygamy*, for he married two Wives called *Adah* and *Zillah*. By the first he had two Children, *Jabal*, who first invented the Use of Tents, and to order Cattle; and *Jubal*, who was the first Inventor of Musical Instruments. By his Wife *Zillah* he had a Son called *Tubalcain*, who first found out the Art of Working of Metals, and was the first that made Armour and warlike Weapons: A Trade well becoming one of murdering *Cain's* Posterity. This is the Register of *Cain's* Posterity for seven Generations, which *Moses* might enumerate perhaps to shew who were the Authors or Inventors of certain Arts or Trades, and who were instrumental in corrupting the better Seed of *Adam* afterwards. But of *Cain's* more immediate bloody Race, none was more eminently barbarous than *Lamech*; for his Wives,

Translation; and almost all the Versions have committed a Fault in translating *Gen. iv. 15. That God had put a Mark on Cain, lest any finding him should kill him*: Tho' the Original says no such Thing, as the LXX. have, who render it very well thus, *That God set a Sign or Wonder before Cain, to persuade him, that whosoever should find him should not kill him.* Almost the same with that which is said, *Exod. x. 1, 2. that God did set Signs before the Egyptians, and Is. lxvi. 19. that he would set a Sign among the Heathen.* Where 'tis evident, he does not mean any particular Mark, which should

be set on their Bodies, but only those Signs and Wonders, which he wrought in *Egypt* to oblige *Pharaoh* to let his People go, and the miraculous Manner, after which he delivered them from the *Babylonish* Captivity. This Explanation is natural and agreeable to the Methods of divine Providence, which is wont to convince the incredulous by Signs and Wonders. Nor could any less assure *Cain*, in the Fear he was under that the First that did meet him should not kill him, after what God had said to him, in upbraiding him with his Crime,

knowing that all Men hated him for his Cruelty, were afraid for him; upon which, to satisfy them, he boastingly said, that none could resist him, for he had murder'd a Man, though he was wounded; and making himself secure to them, he tells them, tho' in a scoffing Manner, that if *Cain's* Death was to be aveng'd Seven-fold, his would be seventy Times seven Times, valuing himself upon more Murders than *Cain* could. And thus much for *Cain* and his Offspring, which were all swept away by the Deluge.

Adam having thus unhappily lost his Son *Abel*, God supply'd his Loss by giving him another, whom he named *Seth*; for, saith *Eve*, "God hath given me another Son instead of *Abel*, whom *Cain* slew." This Man had a Son called *Enos*, of whom it is said, that in his Time Men began to call upon the Name of the Lord; which is to be understood of a publick Worship, or with Ceremonies. Through this *Seth*, *Adam's* Line is by *Moses* continued in Ten Generations before the Flood, with the Age of each of those long-liv'd * Fathers. Among these, in the Seventh Degree from *Adam*, lived *Enoch*, to whom this singular Testimony and Character was given, That God was so pleas'd with his good Life and virtuous Conversation, that he translated him to Heaven immediately. *Enoch* left behind him his Son *Methusaleh*, the longest-liv'd of the Patriarchs, and he left behind him *Lamech* the Father of *Noah*, whose Birth was congratulated with this prophetick Rapture by his Father, † That he should prove a Comfort to his Family for the Curse which the Lord had laid upon the Earth: Which Prophecy was verified, but in another Manner; for *Noah* by his righteous Life deliver'd the Church, and preserv'd it from perishing by his Obedience.

By this Time the World began to grow populous, and tho' *Seth* and his Progeny for some Ages were thy

* See Gen. v.

† See Gen. v. 29.

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of converſing with *Cain* and his Family, by reaſon of their barbarous and bloody Diſpoſition ; yet Time wore off that Averſion, and as the World grew more replenish'd with People, the Generation of the Righteous indulging themſelves in too great a Liberty, entertained a more free and familiar Converſation with the wicked Offspring of curſed *Cain*, than was fit or ſafe for them. By which Means having expoſed themſelves to the Allurements of their Women, the Luſt of the Eye repreſenting the Daughters of Men fair, prevail'd upon the 3 Sons of God to take them. It is not to be doubted, but that theſe, who were the Offspring of the Righteous, and profeſs'd themſelves to be the Sons of God, were not a little by this Time degenerated from the Virtue and Piety of their Anceſtors. For we find that immediately after this God

3 Sons of God. The two great Families deriv'd from *Adam*, viz. That by *Cain*, and that by *Seth*, (who ſucceeded righteous *Abel*) as they differed in their Natures and Courſe of Life, ſo they were diſtinguiſh'd by very different Appellations. For the Offspring of *Cain* being wholly given up to worldly Pleaſures, and minding only earthly Things were called Men, or Sons of Men : But the Offspring of *Seth*, becauſe they addicted themſelves to Virtue and Piety, and profeſs'd to worſhip the true God, were called the Sons of God.

This is very rational and plauſible, and, I believe, true : And yet a modern Annotator, not without Reaſon, ſays, ſome Verſions have not been exact enough, in rendering what *Moses* remarks of the Behaviour of thoſe who were in Authority an Age before the Deluge ; making him ſay, *Gen. vi. 2. That the Sons of God ſaw the Daughters of Men, that they were fair, and they took them Wives of all that they choſe.* This gave Occaſion to that extravagant Opinion of ſeveral Jewiſh Writers, followed by ſeveral Fathers of the Church, viz. That Angels had come down upon Earth, and taken to themſelves Wives, with whom they begat a Generation of Giants : And

to that no leſs extravagant Fancy of others who imagined that the Sons of Men did ſignify the Devils. But it was eaſy to have obſerved, that the Word *Elohim* often ſignifies no more than a Judge or Sovereign, or a Perſon inveſted with Authority, as the beſt Interpreters do acknowledge ; and that as the *Hebrew* does expreſs the inferior Sort of People by the *Sons of Men*, ſo the *Daughters of Men* ſignify no more than the Daughters of the inferior Sort. It muſt have been obſerved further, that the Verb *Lahach* does not only ſignify *to take*, here, and in ſeveral other Places, but *to take by Force*, or *Surprize*, or *to raviſh*, and that this Behaviour is called a *Violence*, *v. 11, 13.* which provok'd God to ſend the Deluge on the Earth. *Moses's* Deſign then is to aggravate the Wickedneſs of that Age, by ſhewing that thoſe who were in Authority, and conſequently ſhould have been exemplary for Virtue and Piety, were nothing but Patterns of Luſt and Violence : So that the Words ſhould have been render'd, *That the Sons of the Sovereignty ſeeing that the Daughters of the inferior Sort were fair, they took them by Force, and raviſh'd them at their Pleaſures* as ſome Verſions and Interpreters have expreſs'd them.

complained of the Wickedness of Man in general. But how depraved soever they were before, this Alliance with those who were not the same with them in the Profession, at least, of Religion, and the Worship of God, did fill up the Measure of their Iniquity, and aggravate their Sin. God seeing the Corruption general, and daily increase, is said to repent that he had made Man, and seeing no Hopes of their Repentance, he declar'd he would destroy the whole Race: Only *Noah*, who was a just and pious Man, found Favour in the Sight of God, and for his Sake, his Family, eight Persons in all, were exempted from the general Destruction, which by the Flood was brought upon the rest of Mankind.

Of this approaching Judgment, the merciful God gave Mankind Warning long before he executed it; for tho' the Wickedness of Man was so great, that (speaking after the Manner of Men) God is said to have repented that he had made Man, yea that it grieved him at the Heart; yet, saith God, my Spirit shall not always strive with Man, my Justice provokes, my Mercy intercedes; I am at Strife with my self, how to deal with this sinful Generation; yet since Man is also Flesh, I will not sweep him away with a sudden Destruction, I will give him yet a Time to return, and repent, yet his Days shall be an hundred and twenty Years. The^h hundred and twenty Years are almost expired, the Term of Reprieval is at Hand: And yet they shall have a second Warning. God was unwilling to destroy them yet, unless they would wilfully run upon their own Ruin; for seven Days hence, says he, I will cause it to rain forty Days upon

^h Hundred, &c. This is a great Instance of God's Forbearance, and shews the Difference between the Mercy of God and that of Man. For Man seldom gives Warning where he intends to strike; and more seldom strikes, but where he intends to destroy. "Why dost thou give Notice of thy Judgments thou art about to execute?"

"That I may never execute those Evils which I give Notice of," saith St. Chrysostom answering in the Lord's Stead. And to the like Purpose St. Hierom: "God, because he desires to punish no Man, threatens them with his Punishments like a Father, and shakes his Rod, because he has no mind to correct his Children."

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Book I.

General.

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GENESIS CHAP. VII.

Noah enters the Ark.



GENESIS 7. Verse 1.

*And the LORD said unto Noah, come thou
and all thy house, into the ark, for thee have
I seen righteous before me etc.*

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the Earth. It will be seven Days before it begin to rain, and it will continue forty Days raining : If in that Time they had all turned from their evil Ways, I doubt not but their Doom had been reversed, as it was afterwards at the Preaching of *Jonah*.

But before the hundred and twenty Years were expired, God, seeing no Amendment, declar'd to *Noah* his Resolution to destroy all Flesh from the Earth by a Flood of Waters; but for the Preservation of *Noah* and his Family, and Seed to replenish the depopulated Earth, he commanded him to make an ⁱ Ark, or Ship of vast Bigness to receive them, and some of all Creatures. This Ark God directed *Noah* to make of *Gophir*, or *Cedar*, and to pitch it both within and without, that the Waters might not penetrate it. The Length of it was to be an hundred and fifty Yards, the Breadth twenty five, and the Height fifteen. There was three Stories or Decks in it; the First and Second might serve for the Beasts and the Provisions; the Third it's likely serv'd to lodge *Noah* and his Family, and to keep the Birds. Every Story or Deck might be divided into several Apartments; and there was a Window above, or an Opening, which went quite round to give Light to the whole Vessel, and the Door or Entering Port was in the Side.

ⁱ Ark. Some of the Ancients not thinking the Ark by these Dimensions spacious enough to receive commodiously all the Creatures that were to enter therein, with their Stowage of Provision and Necessaries, have extended this Measure by the Geometrical Cubit; which would make the Ark six Times bigger. But according to the Computation of Bishop *Wilkins* and other learned Men, it is plain that the Ark was capable of all those Creatures that came. Had we never seen a Ship, and should be told how many Men, and what Provisions and Merchandize one will carry, it would seem to us no less incredible, than what *Moses* tells of the

Contents of the Ark. But the Geometrical Calculation makes out, that they are both equally possible, and shews that *Moses* Spoke Truth. For had he been an Impostor, it would have been a very difficult Matter for him to have found out the exact Bulk of the Ark, in Proportion to what it contain'd. It is not to be suppos'd that he made a Geometrical Calculation, which requires much Application and Reflection. It is more likely that he related the Fact historically, as he had received it from his Ancestors, who were not very remote from the Flood, even tho' we had no Regard to Revelation.

Noah having received his Orders and Directions how to make the Ark, and an Assurance from God, that tho' he destroy'd all Flesh beside, yet he would establish his Covenant with him, ^k finish'd the Ark seven Days before the Rain began to fall. All Things being thus prepar'd, God gave Notice to *Noah* to come into the Ark with his Family, and to take in with him every living Thing of all Flesh, both of Cattle and Beasts of the Field, Birds and Fowls of the Air, and creeping Things, two of a Sort, one Male, and one Female; to keep Seed to stock the Earth again. But of clean Beasts, he was order'd to take them in by Sevens, three Pairs of Males, and three of Females, and the Seventh for Sacrifice. All which Creatures, God, by a secret Instinct, ^l disposed to come and offer themselves unto him, and with them he was also to take in Food of all Sorts that were then eaten, sufficient to sustain himself and them.

Noah having pursu'd these Directions, enters the Ark with his Family in the Six hundredth Year of his Age: And on the Seventeenth Day of the Second Month, (which was about the Beginning of *May*) the whole Face of Nature began to put on a dismal Aspect, as if the Earth were to suffer a final Dissolution, and all Things return to their primitive *Chaos*. The Cataracts of Heaven were opened, and the Sea forgetting its Bounds, overspread the Earth with a

* *Finish'd*. It is natural for any one to ask where the Ark was built; which in all probability was in *Mesopotamia*: For the Terrestrial Paradise being there, it is likely the first Men did not remove far from thence, and that *Noah* liv'd there. And the Ark rested upon the Mountains of *Armenia*, which is not far from thence.

^l *Disposed*. Some have question'd how *Noah* could bring all Sorts of Birds and Beasts to one Place? The Question is ridiculous, considering it was not *Noah*

that brought them, but God by his secret Providence disposing them: Tho' it might justly be answer'd in the Case of *Noah* alone, exclusive of God's Power. That all Sorts of Creatures having been created in that Country, some of every kind had remained there, which *Noah* without any Miracle might have tamed some Time before the Flood; so that when the Deluge came on, they might naturally be brought to the Ark, at the Time when *Noah* shut it up.

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dreadful Inundation. Too late Wretched Man is sensible of his deserved Fate, and in vain he climbs the Hills and Eminencies to shun the Vengeance of his angry God; the highest Mountains yield him but a short Reprieve, and every little Refuge soon disappears with him. Forty Days and Nights it continu'd raining, at the End of which the Ark began to float; the Surface of the Waters being fifteen Cubits, or two and twenty Feet and a half of our Measure, above the Tops of the highest^m Mountains. Here was a dismal Face of Things; instead of the Earth adorn'd with the Productions of Nature and the Improvements of Art, nothing but a watry Defart appeared, which offer'd nothing to the View of Heaven but the floating Wrecks of Man and his Fellow-Creatures, who, except *Noah* and those in the Ark, were swept away with the Common Destruction.

^m *Mountains.* The Atheist especially will here question the Universality of the Deluge; and some Moderns will not allow so great a Quantity of Water as to cover the whole Globe; or that if the Ark had been lifted so high above the Earth, Men and Beasts, by reason of the Sharpness of the Air, could not have liv'd; that Men not being then dispers'd over all the Earth, it was sufficient to drown that Part of the Earth they liv'd on; and that when the Scripture says, The Deluge cover'd all the Earth, it may very well be understood of all the Earth that was inhabited. To these Objections I answer: That the Letter of the Text in *Genesis*, is express for the Universality of the Deluge, and that it is there said, God resolv'd to destroy all Men, Beasts, Reptiles and Birds, except *Noah*, and those preserv'd with him in the Ark. And as in the Beginning the Mass of the Earth was cover'd with Water, the same Water, with the Clouds dissolv'd into Water, afforded the same Quantity, which meeting together might again cover the Globe of the Earth. This *Moses* plainly denoted when he said, *The Fountains of the Deep, and the Cataracts of Heaven, were opened.* And those Waters, when the Rain

had ceas'd, being drain'd away by Degrees into the Deep, and exhal'd in Vapours, the Earth appear'd, and was restor'd to its former State. As to the Impossibility of Creatures breathing so far above the highest Mountains, by reason of the Sharpness of the Air, Experience shews, That the Creatures of any Country can live in another temperate Country: And that in this Case the Mass of Water having fill'd up the Spaces of the grosser Air, made the Air, which was before near the Earth, to rise to the Tops of the highest Mountains; so that the Men and Creatures that were in the Ark breath'd the same Air, that they would have breath'd at the Foot of those Mountains. Besides, had not all the Earth been cover'd by the Waters, the Building of the Ark had been needless, and God could have warn'd *Noah* to go to some other Country, which was not to be drown'd. In short, it would have required no less a Miracle to keep up the Waters in one Part of the Earth, than to cover it all. To conclude, tho' God caus'd the Flood only as a Punishment for the Sins of Men, yet it's positively said, that all but those in the Ark perish'd.

God having thus satisfied his Justice in the Vengeance with which he had long threatned Mankind, began to think of the poor Remains of Nature he had for a Year confin'd within their floating Tabernacle. After a Year's Time (for so long the Waters continu'd over the Earth) God, remembering his Covenant which he made with *Noah*, causes a Wind to blow, which drove back the Waters, and left the Earth in a short Time dry. This *Noah* first discover'd by the resting of the Ark upon one of the ⁿ Mountains of *Ararat*, in the Country of *Armenia*. This was on the third of *October*, and on the Twelfth of *December* the Tops of the Mountains appeared. It was a welcome Sight to *Noah*, who, wisely considering, that tho' the Tops of the Mountains were discoverable, the Vallies might still be overflow'd, waited forty Days longer before he attempted any further Discovery; and then opening a Window of the Ark, he let fly a Raven, to try whether the Waters were dry'd up, but the Raven did not return. Seven Days after he let fly a Dove, which finding no Place where to rest her Foot, returned to the Ark. Seven Days after he sent her out again, and she return'd with an Olive-Branch. By this, *Noah* knew that the Waters did not cover the Earth where the Olive-Trees stood. However, he stay'd seven Days longer, and then he let out the Dove the third Time, which did not return; whereupon *Noah* prepared to go out of the Ark, by uncovering the Roof of it. Yet having a pious Regard to God's Providence and Direction, as well in going forth, as in going in, he continued fifty five Days longer, that the Earth might be dry, and went out the twenty seventh Day of the second Month, and first of the Week. Thus there was a compleat

ⁿ *Mountains*. Commentators reconcile several seeming Contradictions, by shewing that the Plural Number is employ'd for the Singular, which is very common in the Style of the *Hebrews*,

As for Example, when it is said, That the Ark rested on the Mountains of *Ararat*, *Gen. xviii. 4*. That is, on one of those Mountains.

GENESIS CHAP. VII.

The old World drowned.



GENESIS 7. Verse 11.

*In the six hundredth year of Noahs life,
in y^e second month y^e seventeenth day of the
month the same day were all y^e fountains.*

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Solar Year, from the Beginning of the Flood, to the Day when *Noah* and his Wife, their Sons and their Wives, came out of the Ark, with all the living Creatures that had gone into it. Then began the Month of *May*, when the Trees and the Plants bud and shoot out: And now Nature puts on her youthful vernal Dress again, all Things appear in their former Gaiety, and the Earth abundantly produces fresh Food for the Creatures preserv'd in the Ark; and all other Parts of the Creation contributed to the Use and Pleasure of Mankind as before the Deluge.

The Earth being thus prepar'd to receive *Noah* and his Family, he by God's express Command descends from the Ark, with the Creatures committed to his Charge; and being safely landed, the first Thing he did was to offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving to the Lord, who had preserv'd him and his Family from the Deluge to restore Mankind. In order to which he built an Altar, (it is likely on the Mountain where the Ark rested, and the first Altar we have Mention of) and taking of all the clean Birds and Beasts, he made a Burnt-Offering on the said Altar. The Sacrifice was acceptable to the Lord, and drew his Blessing on Men, on Beasts, and on the Earth it self: For God not only declared his Acceptance of *Noah's* Piety, but made a Covenant with him, (and in him with his Posterity) graciously promising, that he would not again curse the Ground for Man's Sake, ° though the Imagination of his Heart was Evil, nor interrupt the Seasons any more.

The Order of Nature destroy'd by the Flood being restor'd by God's Promise, he particularly bless'd *Noah* and his Children, commanded them to multiply and fill the Earth, appointed Man Lord over all the Beasts

° *Though*. This is commonly translated *for*, but very injuriously; for it makes the sacred Author speak quite contrary to what he design'd, and is an Affront to the Justice, Goodness and Wisdom of God, who, by this Translation of *for* for *though*, might seem to bless Man for his evil Imaginations.

of the Earth, and the Fowls of the Air, and Fishes of the Sea : And whereas hitherto Men had liv'd upon ^p Vegetables, God having at first appointed Herbs and the Fruits of Trees for their Food ; after the Flood their Fare was enlarg'd, and they were allow'd to eat Flesh : Only he excepted Blood, and Meat strangled, from which the Blood had not been drawn, lest Men should grow savage and, like Brutes, eat the Creatures alive ; that is, Flesh with the Blood thereof. They were therefore first to take away the Life, by letting out the Blood, and then to dress and eat the Flesh. But at the same Time that he permitted them to kill all sorts of Animals, he strictly charged them not to shed the Blood of Man, threatening those, whether Men or Beasts, that should shed it, with Vengeance. In short, God ratify'd the Promise he had made to *Noah*, not to destroy Men and Beasts any more by an universal Deluge ; and to render it more solemn, confirm'd it by a Covenant and Alliance between himself and Man, placing the ¹ Rainbow as a Sign of it in the Sky. A Bow he set, an Instrument of Terror ; but a Bow unstring'd, a Bow with both Horns upon the Ground, a Bow hanging in the Clouds, not in his Hand, an Emblem of his Favour, that he would not suddenly shoot forth the Arrows of his Wrath, though never so justly provoked.

And now the whole Race of *Cain* being cut off by the Flood, it might reasonably have been expected, that the ^r new World would have been planted with

^p *Vegetables.* God at first was satisfied with appointing the Fruits and Herbs for the Food of Man, as being the more natural Sustainance ; but did not by any positive Law forbid them the eating the Flesh of Beasts. Though it is possible they might make use of it, and God after the Flood might authorize that Practice.

¹ *Rainbow.* The *Jews*, saith *Maimonides*, when they see the Rainbow, bless

God for being mindful of his Covenant, and faithful in his Promise. Though this Covenant was not made only between him and their Nation, but with all the Inhabitants of the World, between him and the Earth, that he would not drown it with an universal Deluge.

^r *New.* I call this the new World after the Flood, as *St. Peter* calls that before this Flood, the *old World*. See 2 *Pet.* ii. 5.

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better People: But as in the Ark there were unclean Beasts preserv'd, as well as clean; so in *Noah's* Family there was a wicked *Cham*, as well as a pious *Shem* and *Japheth*. For of the three Sons of *Noah*, who had been so wonderfully preserv'd with him in the Ark, to repeople the World, there was one of them, who having deserv'd the Curse of his Father, drew also the Curse of God upon himself; and instead of being the Head of a Holy Race, was the Father of so wicked a Posterity, as was to be the Object of God's Anger and Reprobation. And this was *Cham* and his Race; for the first Instance of Man's Impiety, after the Deluge, was that of *Cham's* discovering his Father's Nakedness, in a very rude and prophane manner; which happen'd thus:

Noah having in a most devout and solemn manner offer'd a Sacrifice of Praise to God, for his Preservation and Deliverance, received the Establishment of God's Covenant with him and his Posterity for a perpetual Security from another Deluge, and a Command to multiply and replenish the Earth, apply'd himself to Husbandry; and, amongst other Improvements which he made of the Ground, he planted a Vineyard. Natural Curiosity invited him to taste of the Fruit of his Labour, but not aware of the intoxicating Quality of the Wine, he drinking too freely of it fell into Drunkenness; during which he lay in a very indecent Posture, his Body being uncover'd, in his Tent, and so expos'd to the Eyes of his Children; Graceless *Cham* was the first that spied his Father in this Condition, who, instead of concealing his Weakness, betrays him to his Brethren, and made him the Subject of Ridicule and Derision. But *Shem* and *Japheth* abominating their Brother's ill Nature, and blushing to see their Father lying in this immodest Posture, took a Garment, and laid it upon their Shoulders, and so went backward and cover'd his Nakedness, upon which their pious Modesty did not allow them

them to look. *Noah* being recover'd from his Wine, and understanding how his younger Son *Cham* had serv'd him, he curs'd his Race in the Person of *Canaan*; "Curfed, said he, be ^t *Canaan*, a Servant of " Servants shall he be to his Brethren." But when he found how regardful his other Sons had been in concealing his Shame, he rewards their pious Care with this Blessing: " ^t Blessed be the Lord of *Shem*, " says he, God shall enlarge *Japheth*, and he shall " dwell in the Tents of ^u *Shem*, and let *Canaan* be " his Servant.

We have no Mention of any other Children *Noah* had, but these three Sons; from each of which descended a numerous Offspring, which afterwards peopled many Countries, and, in process of Time, the whole inhabited World. And now there was but one Language used and known among Men; who hitherto dwelt at the Foot of the Mountains of *Armenia*, not far, it is likely, from the Place where the Ark rested; where their Offspring multiplying by degrees, they spread themselves into the neighbouring Countries, as *Syria* and *Mesopotamia*: And their Number still increasing, they took their Course Westward, till finding an inviting Plain in the Land of ^w *Shinar*, they set down in order to settle there.

^t *Canaan*. That is, all the Posterity of *Ham*, as well as himself; for *Canaan* was the Son of *Ham*. *Genesis* ix. 18.

^t *Blessed*. The Blessing of God had Effect; for the Worship of the true God continued in the Race of *Shem*, and the Posterity of *Japheth* possessed a vast Extent of Land, peopling all *Europe*, and Part of *Asia*; for which Reason it is said, *He shall dwell in the Tents of Shem*, that is, among the Progeny of the latter. A great Instance of the Reverence Children ought to bear towards their Parents to cover their Faults, instead of exposing them, with the Blessing that attends the one, and the Curse that pursues the other.

^u *Shem*. *Shem* is called the Father of all the Children of *Eber*, *Genesis* x. 21;

Eber was Great Grandson, or the fourth from *Shem*: And from him both the People of *Israel* were called *Ebrews*, (or *Hebrews*) and the Language they spake was called the *Hebrew* Tongue: So that from *Shem* came the *Jews*, besides many other People that inhabited *Asia*. This Part of the World, which is called *Europe*, is generally held to have been peopled by the Posterity of *Japheth*. And besides those *Canaanites*, and other People which anciently possess'd the Land of *Canaan*, the *Egyptians*, *Ethiopians*, and other Eastern and Southern Nations, are taken to be the descendants of *Cham*.

^w *Shinar*. This is by some suppos'd to have been the Place where the Garden of *Eden* was; but afterwards it was call'd *Chaldea*.

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GENESIS CHAP. XI.
The building of Babel.



GENESIS II. Verse 4.

*And they said, Go to let us build us
a City and a Towre whose top may
reach unto heaven. etc.*

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And now two unruly Passions, Ambition and Fear, began to possess the Minds of Men. They were desirous to perpetuate their Name, and no less afraid that they should be scatter'd abroad. To effect the one, and prevent the other, they agreed to build themselves a City, and a Tower of such extraordinary Height, that it is said, they design'd the Top thereof should reach to Heaven. The projected Height of this vast Structure hath been the Occasion of a Conjecture in some, that they not only intended it, as a Monument of their Power, but as a Place of Refuge, in case of another Flood; which shewed their Diffidence of God's Veracity in keeping his Covenant made with them, that he would not bring a general Deluge over the Earth again. But whether Pride or Fear put them upon this Project, it's certain they undertook this vast Work, and being unanimous, they were not daunted at the Greatness of the Undertaking; but, in order to it, began to make * Brick, which they burnt, and, instead of Mortar, they made a † Cement of *Bitumen* or slimy Clay, of a pitchy Substance.

Thus they began, and for some Time proceeded in their intended Work; but God, who saw their Arrogance and Presumption, resolv'd to disappoint them, and shew them, that they were not out of the Reach of his Providence and Justice. The Almighty therefore looking on their Vanity with Indignation, expostulates thus with himself: "Behold they are all
" one, and have but one Language, and this they
" begin to do; ‡ Shall they not be restrain'd in all
" that

* *Brick.* Stone was very scarce in that Country as *Curtius* observes; for being a Champaign Country, they had no Mines or Quarries.

† *Cement.* The Mortar they us'd was a sort of natural *Calx*, which they found in Springs or Rivers. And *Herodotus* observes, that the Walls of *Babylon* were built with Brick and Mortar, *l. 1.*

‡ *Shall, &c. Gen. xi. 6.* The Versions say of the Builders of the Tower of *Babel*, And now nothing shall be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. But this is false, for God soon put a Stop to their Design by confounding them and scattering them abroad from thence upon the Face of the Earth. The same Particle, which is indeed sometimes

“ that they have imagin’d to do? Yes; we will go
 “ down and confound their Language, that they may
 “ not understand one another.” Thus the Great
 Creator took Council with his own Wisdom and
 Power, and which at the Expence of a Miracle, he
 immediately put in Execution; for he put a Stop to
 their Proceedings by confounding their Tongues, so
 that they spake several Languages, and could not un-
 derstand one another. Their confus’d Dialects pro-
 duc’d different Ideas in the Minds of the Men of each
 Family, which, for want of understanding each o-
 ther’s Meaning, they apply’d to improper Objects.
 This put them into so great Disorder, that they were
 forc’d to give over building: And being hereby not
 only render’d incapable of carrying on their intended
 Work, and of conversing one with another; and by
 that Means depriv’d of the Comforts and Pleasures of
 mutual Society and Intercourse, they willingly parted
 and dispersed themselves; they who were of one Lan-
 guage one way, and those who were of another going
 another way. Not that there were as many several
 Languages as Persons; but the several Families (com-
 puted to be seventy) which afterwards grew into se-
 veral Nations or People, had each a distinct and pe-
 culiar Language given them. Thus God, by scatter-
 ing them abroad upon the Face of the Earth, at once
 both disappointed their Design, and answer’d his own;
 which was to repeople the Earth more generally and
 speedily, than it is probable they of themselves would
 otherwise have done. This confounding of Language
 gave Name to the City they had begun to build,
 which from thence was called *Babel*, signifying Con-
 fusion.

times taken negatively, is evidently here
 to be taken interrogatively, and is equal
 to the most express Affirmation. We
 should therefore translate this text, with

the *Flemish Revisers* and *Leusden*, thus;
Shall they not be restrained in all that they
have imagined to do? Which was present-
ly executed accordingly.

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• Upon this Separation, the Race of *Shem* settled in *Asia*; those of *Cham*, Part in *Asia*, and Part in *Africk*; and the greater Part of those of *Japheth* in *Europe*. Now among those aspiring Builders of *Babel* was ^b *Nimrod*, a bold and pushing Man, and is by *Moses* called the mighty ^c Hunter before the Lord. It's certain he was a very barbarous and tyrannical Man, and laid the Foundation of the first great Empire in the World, which at first was called the *Babylonian*, from the City *Babel*, or *Babylon*, the Metropolis of it; from whence he going afterwards into *Assyria*, did there build the great City *Nineveh*; and from thence this Monarchy was afterwards called the *Assyrian*, the first of the four.

The Confusion of Tongues, and Disperſion of the Family of *Noah*, fell out an hundred and one Years after the Flood; for *Peleg* the Son of *Eber*, who was Great Grandson to *Shem*, is reckon'd to have been born in the hundredth and first Year after the Flood, and had his Name [*Peleg*] given him for that Diviſi-

^a Upon, &c. *Moses*, *Gen.* chap. x. and xii. particularly ſets down the Nations deſcended from *Noah*, his Son, Grandſons, and Great Grandchildren. The Names of moſt of thoſe Nations being changed, many of them cannot certainly be known; but there are ſome ſtill remaining. The Names of the Sons of *Shem*, as *Elam*, *Aſſur*, *Arphaxad*, *Lud* and *Aram*, are known in Hiſtory, where we find the *Elamites*, the *Aſſyrians*, the *Arphaxadites*, the *Lydians*, and the *Aramites*. The Name of *Chus*, the Son of *Cham*, is given in Scripture to the *Egyptians* and the *Arabs*; the Names of moſt of their Children agreeing with moſt of the Nations of *Arabia*.

^b *Nimrod*. The Word ſignifies Rebel; which Name is no otherwiſe proper to him, than as a Contemner or Deſpiſer of God; and not becauſe he was cruel, or an Oppreſſor, as ſome will have it.

^c Hunter, &c. As to the Character of *Nimrod*, Commentators and Verſions do very much vary. Some will have him to be literally, as the Words im-

ply, a great Hunter; Which in thoſe Days was eſteem'd an honourable and uſeful Employment; and the Country of *Babylon* and *Arabia* abounding very much with wild Beaſts, *Nimrod* by hunting deſtroy'd many of them; for which he became famous. And others ſay, under pretence of gathering a Company of young luſty Fellows together to ſubdue wild Beaſts, he came to uſurp Government over Men. This is plauſible, and not amiſs from the Text. As to the Words, *before the Lord*, ſome will have it that he was a mighty Tyrant and Perſecutor in Religion in the Face of God, before whom he erected a new ſort of Worſhip. As to his being mighty in the Earth, the Verſions vary: The *Septuagint* ſay, *Gen.* x. 8. *He was a Giant*; not only ſays *St. Auguſtine*, for his Strength and Bigneſs, but for his Ambition and Cruelty againſt the Lord, being the firſt that compelled the People, whom he had ſubdued, after the Diſperſion of *Babel*, to worſhip Fire in *Chaldea*.

on of the Earth, which in his Time was parted amongst *Noah's* Posterity.

And now Almighty God having disappointed vain Mankind in raising an everlasting Monument of their Folly, and by so wide a Separation put it out of their Power of ever attempting the like again, began to lay the Foundation of an Holy City, that is, his Church, and design'd *Abram* to be Head of a Race, Elect and Faithful, which should endure for ever. And herein it is to be observ'd, that *Moses* in his Relation chooses rather to write the Genealogy of *Thare* or *Terah*, than of the other Descendants of *Shem*; because *Terah* was the Father of *Abram*, afterwards named *Abraham*, who was called by the Lord to be the Father of the Faithful, and of the Worshippers of the true God; for his Father *Terah* served other Gods, as we may see in *Iosbua* xxiv. 2.

This *Terah* had three Sons, *Haron*, *Nabor*, and *Abram*; for that is the order of their Births. *Haran*, who was much elder than his Brethren, ^d dying before his Father, left one Son named *Lot*, and two Daughters; whereof one was named *Milcab*, and the other *Ischab*, both married to their Uncles; *Milcab* to *Nabor* and *Ischab* to *Abram*, as the *Jews* deliver, who will have her to be called *Sarai* for her Beauty and Housewifry.

After the Death of *Haran*, *Terah* took his Son *Abram*, his Grandson *Lot*, and *Sarai*, and carried them from *Ur* to the Land of *Canaan*; but in their Way coming to *Haran*, (which *St. Stephen* calls *Charran*) they took up their Abode there for a while; during which time *Terah* died being an ^e hundred and forty five

^d Dying. It is remarkable in the Death of *Haran*, that he was the first Son that in a natural Way died before his Father; but as they were born first, they died first; the Father before the Son. *Abel's* Death cannot be objected against this, because it was violent and unnatural.

^e Hundred, &c. *St. Stephen* says, that *Abraham*, after the Death of his Father, remov'd from *Charran* to the Land of *Canaan*, *Acts* vii. 4. and *Genesis* xii. 5. it is said, that *Abraham* was seventy and five Years old when he departed out of *Charran*; and *Genesis* xi. 26. it is said, that

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five Years old. After the Death of *Terah*, God commanded *Abram* to leave this Country, and to go into the Country he would shew him. He promised a mighty People should descend from him, to bless him, and in him to bless all the Nations of the Earth. *Abram*, without any Hesitation, believes God's Word, which promised him two such great Advantages, as making him Head of a great People, and blessing all the World in him, who was to proceed from his Loins.

Abram prepares for his Journey, taking his whole Family, and that of his Nephew *Lot*, to go to the Land which God should shew him, who did not appoint any certain Place, to prove thereby his Faith and Obedience; which he manifestly shewed in his ready Compliance with God's Command. Accordingly *Abram* set out, and pursued his Journey till he came into the Land of *Canaan*, (which was the Country God had directed him to) to that Part which is called the ^f Oak of *Moreh*. Having pass'd through

Terah was seventy Years old when he begat *Abraham*; and *ver.* 32. that he died being two hundred and five Years old. But at this rate *Terah* must have lived sixty Years after *Abraham's* going from *Charran*: For seventy five, the Number of *Abraham's* Years when he left *Charran*, being added to seventy, the Number of *Terah's* Years when he begat *Abraham*, make one hundred forty and five Years only; whereas 'tis said, *Gen.* xi. 32. that he lived two hundred and five. But this must certainly proceed from a Fault crept into the Text of *Moses*; and that of the two hundred and five Years, which are given to *Terah*, when he died at *Charran*, he only lived an hundred forty and five, according to the *Samaritan* Version and the *Samaritan* Chronicle, which without doubt do agree with the *Hebrew* Copy, from which they were translated. This Error has been overlook'd by all or most Commentators and Writers upon the Holy Scriptures, even our most modern Chronologers and others, except the Author of

An Essay for a new Translation of the Bible.

^f Oak. The *Chaldee* Paraphrase and most Rabbies transform into a Plain the Oak of *Moreh*, at which God appeared to *Abram*, *Gen.* xii. 6. and most Versions, except the vulgar *Latin*, transform this Oak into a Valley; and if we were to give it another Signification, we must rather make it signify a Valley than a Plain; because *Sychem* was situated in the Valley of *Anlon*, so called from the Word *Elon*, which signifies an Oak. 'Twas under this Oak that *Jacob* hid the strange Gods which his Servants kept, and the Ear-rings; and 'twas likewise under it that *Deborah*, *Rebecca's* Nurse, was buried, *Gen.* xxxv. 4. 8. 'Twas also under it that *Joshua* set up a great Stone, *Joshua* xxiv. 26. and that *Abimelech* was made King, *Judges* ix. 6. where our Translators render it Plain. But here in *Gen.* xii. 6. the *Septuagint* render it High Oak. But more of this in our Note on the same Word, when we speak of the Oak of *Mamre* a little farther.

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some Parts of the Land, the Lord appeared again to him, and gave him a promise of it to his Posterity, long before he had any Issue, and whilst it was possess'd by other People; for the *Canaanite* then inhabited it. However, *Abram*, to shew his Faith and Gratitude, erected an Altar in that Place to the Lord, who had appeared to him, and made him so gracious a Promise. Going thence to a Mountain, which is on the East of *Bethel*, he there pitched his Tent between *Bethel* and *Hai*: And there he raised an Altar unto the Lord, and called upon his Name. But he had not stay'd long in *Canaan*, before he was forced to remove; for a Famine happening in that Country, he was obliged to go into *Egypt*; which lying near to that Part of *Canaan* where he had settled, and being a fruitful Country, he determin'd to travel thither, and stay there for some time.

Whilst they were upon the Confines of *Egypt*, he had, no doubt, observ'd the Difference in point of Beauty between his own Wife and the *Egyptian* Women; which soon possessed him with a Jealousy, that his Wife's Beauty might indanger his Safety; concluding, that so fair a Woman, and so far excelling the Women of that Country, would soon be taken notice of, and as soon desired. And because the World was not then grown to that Height of Dissoluteness, as lightly to invade the Marriage-Bed, Nuptial Ties being held too sacred to be violated, his Fear suggested to this Apprehension, that if they took *Sarai* to be his Wife, they would make him away, that they might come to the Injoyment of her without the Imputation of Adultery; a Crime imputed even in that Martial Age more heinous than Murder. To prevent this Danger, he open'd his Mind to his Wife; and laying the Cause of his Fears upon her Beauty, he begg'd her to say she was his Sister, that she might not be taken for his Wife; by which Means he might not only escape the apprehended Danger, but might also fare the better for her sake.

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Abram's Fears and Apprehensions were not groundless: For no sooner was he come into *Egypt*, but his Wife's Charms inflam'd the *Egyptians*. Her Beauty was the common Theme of their Praises, which at last reach'd the Court, where those nearest the King acquainted him with this celebrated Beauty. These Encomiums rais'd in the King a Curiosity to see this beautiful Stranger, who is immediately brought to Court, and taken into the King's Apartment; and *Abram* calling her Sister, is very well treated for her Sake, the King bestowing many great Presents on him. Here was a great Instance of the Watchfulness of Providence in the Preservation of the Patriarch's Honour, and his Wife's Chastity, that would not suffer their Marriage-Bed to be defiled: For to deter *Pharaoh* and his Court from any dishonourable Attempt upon *Sarai's* Virtue, God, by inflicting some sudden Sickness or bodily Infirmary on them, restrain'd their unlawful Desires, and made them sensible she was a married Woman. The King took the Hint, and calling for *Abram* blam'd him for deceiving him, which might have led him into a fatal Error; and not knowing her to be a married Woman, might have taken her to his own Bed. Then in a great Displeasure he bids him take his Wife, and be gone, and commands his Servants neither to injure him in his Person, or his Goods, but permit him to remove quietly with all his Substance; which was much improv'd during his Stay in *Egypt* by the Favour of the King, for he was very rich in Cattle, in Silver and Gold.

Hitherto his Nephew *Lot* continued with him, whose Stock increased proportionably with his Uncle *Abram's*. They leaving *Egypt* make towards *Canaan* again, and arrive at *Bethel*, the Place where *Abram* had made an Altar to the Lord before he went into *Egypt*, and there he worshipped God again.

And now their Families growing large, and their Flocks increasing, they began to labour again under a

Scarcity of Food for their Cattle; which might probably proceed partly from the late Famine there, and partly from the great Number of the *Canaanites* and *Perizzites* that possessed the most fruitful Part of the Country. This Scarcity of Provisions and Pasturage caused some little Quarrels between the Herdsmen of *Abram*, and those of *Lot*, which gave *Abram* some Uneasiness; who fearing that this Contention among the Servants, if not timely suppress'd; might rise higher, to the indangering of a Breach betwixt his Kinsman and him, took an Opportunity to speak with his Nephew *Lot* about it; and in soft and mild Terms said to him, *Let there be no Dispute between us, nor our Servants; for we are Brethren.* *Abram* therefore to prevent the worst, wisely proposes parting, seeing it scarcely probable, that since their Substance was grown so great, they should with the same Conveniency and Accommodation dwell any longer together. And though *Abram* was in all Respects a greater and better Man than *Lot*, yet to shew his Prudence, not Meanness of Spirit, he condescends to give his Cousin *Lot* his Choice of Settlement in what Part of the Land he liked best, and himself would take what he refused. *Lot* readily closed with this advantageous Proposal; for having before surveyed the Country, he chose for himself all the Plain of *Jordan*, which he had observed to be very fertile, and very well water'd. Thus having parted by Agreement, *Lot* directs his Course Eastward, and settles in the Plain of *Jordan*, pitching his Tent towards *Sodom*: The Inhabitants of which Place exceeded in that Age the worst of Sinners. *Lot* being thus gone, *Abram* stay'd still in the Land of *Canaan*, where God renewed to him

§ *Brethren.* So the Ancients reputed and called those that sprang from one common Root, though not in a direct Line begotten by one and the same Father. In which Respect those were Brethren in a natural Relation; as with Respect to

Religion, and the Worship of the true God, they were Brethren also in a spiritual Relation: Both which would have suffered, if this Contention had continued and got to any Head between them or their Dependants.

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the Gift of that Land, and to his Seed for ever. This very Gift, as penn'd by the Direction of God himself, stands inrolled in the sacred Record thus: "Lift up now thine Eyes, and look from the Place where thou art, Northward, Southward, Eastward, and Westward; for all the Land which thou seest will I give unto thee, and to thy Seed for ever: And I will make thy Seed as the Dust of the Earth; so that if a Man can number the Dust of the Earth, then shall thy Seed be number'd. Arise, walk thro' the Land in the Length and Breadth thereof; for I give it unto thee. Hereupon *Abram* removing his Tent, went and dwelt at the ^h Oak of *Mamre*, which is in *Hebron*; and there he built an Altar unto the Lord.

In a short Time after happen'd that memorable Battle fought by four Kings against five, the first pitched Battle we have any Account of in sacred History. The Occasion of which was this; *Chedarlaomer*, King of *Elam*, had held five petty Kings in a tributary Subjection to him for some Years; of which Number the King of *Sodom* was one. At length they confederated against him: Whereupon he, with three other Kings, made War upon them to reduce them to their former Subjection. The tributary Kings resolve to try their Fate in a pitch'd Battle, and are defeated. The Vale of *Siddim*, where the Battle was fought, had in it many Pits, out of which had been digged Slime, (a kind of clammy Earth, called *Bitumen*, very good to make Mortar with,) and here the Kings of *Sodom*

^h Oak. Translators have been guilty of the same Fault in rendring the Oak of *Morah* the Plain of *Morah*, as here in rendring the Oak of *Mamre* the Plain of *Mamre*. *Saxomen* writes, that this Oak was still famous in the Time of *Constantine* for Pilgrimages, and for an anniversary Feast which was solemnized there: That it was distant from *Hebron* but six Miles, where there were still to be seen some Cottages which *Abraham* had built

near to that Oak, and a Well which he had digged; and whither the *Jews*, *Pagans*, and *Christians*, travell'd every Year, either out of Devotion, or a Design to Trade. *Brochard* assures us, That he had seen this Oak, and had carried home some of the Fruit and Wood of it; and he observes, that its Leaves are somewhat larger than those of the *Mastick-Tree*, but that its Fruit resembles an *Acorn*.

and *Gomorrab*, in their Flight, are said to have fallen. But whether being pursued amongst those Pits they were over-taken and slain, or whether taking Shelter there they hid and secur'd themselves till the Pursuit was over, is not express'd. However, after the Rout the Conquerors plunder'd the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, carried away all the Goods and Provisions, and made the Inhabitants Prisoners: Amongst whom was *Abram's* Nephew *Lot*, who by this Time was become an Inhabitant of *Sodom*, though upon his parting with his Uncle we left him only pitching his Tent towards *Sodom*; but now he was gone to dwell in *Sodom*, and with the *Sodomites* was taken Prisoner.

But some made their escape; one of which came and brought the News of this Defeat to *Abram*, who remained still near the Oak that belonged to *Mamre*, with his two Brothers *Escol* and *Aner*, who were in Confederacy with him. *Abram* in haste musters up what Force he could to rescue his Kinsman; and choosing amongst his own Servants such as were fit to bear Arms, to the Number of Three hundred and eighteen, accompanied with his ⁱ Confederates, he pursues the Enemy as far as *Dan*. The Night favouring his Design, he divides his Forces into small Parties, and attacks them on all Sides. The Unexpectedness of this sudden Attempt upon a victorious Army laden with Spoil, and the Midnight Alarm, struck them with such Horror and Amazement, that *Abram* obtain'd a sudden and easy Victory. *Chedarlaomer*, and the Kings that were with him, fell in the Action, and their whole Army was routed, which they drove as far as *Hoba*, which is on the Left of *Damascus*. Thus *Abram* rescu'd his Nephew *Lot*, and all the Prisoners, and retook all the Booty.

ⁱ Confederates. See *Gen.* xiv. 13. and v. 24.

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GENESIS CHAP. XIV.
Melchizedek gives presents to Abram.



GENESIS 14. Verse 18.

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine and he was the priest of the most high GOD. etc.

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The first that congratulated him upon his Victory was the King of ^k *Sodom*, who, in thankful Acknowledgment of the Benefit he had received from *Abram's* Assistance and Courage, offer'd him the Goods which he had retaken, desiring him only to restore the Prisoners. *Abram* was not so sordid as to take the Advantage of the Misery of War; for saving to his Confederates that Part of the Plunder which by the Rules of War belong'd to them; he restored to the King of *Sodom* both the Prisoners and the Goods, having before resolved not to keep any thing of them, that it might be said he undertook that Enterprize for the publick Good, which all Men of Honour and Piety ought to support.

The next that congratulated *Abram* upon his Success was ^l *Melchizedek*, King of *Salem*, who, meet-

^k *Sodom*. By this it seems, *Gen. xiv. v. 17.* the King of *Sodom* was not slain at the Battle of the Kings aforesaid. For the Text saying only that the King of *Sodom* came out to meet him, it may reasonably be supposed he came from some Place where he had hid himself, or from *Sodom*, whither, after the Conqueror had withdrawn, he might return.

^l *Melchizedek*. There have been, and yet are, great Disputes among the Learned who this *Melchizedek* was, and where this City *Salem* stood. And that which still hath aggravated the Difference, is the Description of him in *Heb. vii. 3.* where it is said, That *Melchizedek* was without Father, without Mother, without Descent, having neither Beginning of Days, nor End of Life. These Words have occasion'd many wild and whimsical Speculations. But among all the Opinions about him, that of *Epiphanius*, and others, as to his Person, is very probable; who think that he was a *Sidonian*, which they seem to take out of *Josephus*, who calls him a Prince of the *Canaanites*. But we may observe, that the Apostle does not describe him by those Qualities with respect to his Person, but to his Office or Dignity of Priesthood, which made him like *Jesus Christ*: And on that Account it's enough that his Genealogy, Birth, and Death, are not recorded in Scripture, to

justify this Description, as several have observed. But since it is usual in the best Authors to describe Famous Nations and Persons, as if they were the first of their Order, and as if they had produced themselves, it is more natural to have Recourse to this Custom. History speaks of several People who had no Original: The *Italians* about *Rome* were called *Aborigines*, the *Athenians* call'd themselves *Autochthonous*: And *Seneca* speaking of two Kings of the *Romans*, *Ancus* and *Servius*, says, *The first had no Father, and the second no Mother*. After all, to come the nearest to the Light we can; If it be true that *Melchizedek* was descended of wicked and idolatrous Parents, as most of the Fathers think, and that he was the first and last Priest of the True God of his Race, the Apostle might in the Epistle to the *Hebrews* very well describe him under those Characters in *Ver. 3.* And since our Language is not so metaphorical as the dead Languages, we should follow in a popular Version the Meaning which we have observed, and translate with *Outram* this Text, *Heb. vii. 3.* That *Melchizedek* was the most illustrious of his Family, and had neither Predecessor nor Successor in his *Impley*. Which Version is very natural, and expresses fully the Sense of the Words of the Original.

ing him in his Return from the Battle, brought him a Present of Bread and Wine, to refresh him and his Men upon their March; and both blessed *Abram*, and God too, that had given him good Success. In Requital of which Kindness, *Abram* made him a Present of the tenth Part of the Spoils that he had taken in that Expedition.

Notwithstanding this Victory over these Kings, *Abram* considering himself but as a Stranger in that Country, might be apprehensive that the *Babylonians*, whom he had lately defeated, to repair their Loss might meditate a Revenge; therefore to take off any Anxiety of Mind that might proceed from temporal Causes, God encourages him, saying, *Fear not, Abram, for I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great Reward.*

Tho' this Providential Care of the Almighty was an opportune Hint to *Abram*, to put him in Mind of the Promise he gave him, that his Issue should inherit the Land; yet he had not been pleased hitherto to bestow any Heir upon him; but that his Servant was like to inherit his Estate. Whereupon God, to satisfy him, tells him, That not his Servant, but one that should come out of his own Bowels should be his Heir; and that he should not only have an Heir of his own Body, but a numerous Offspring, like the Stars of Heaven for Number. But *Abram* desiring some Assurance for these Things, God gratified him in making a Covenant with him by expresse Promise, attended with a very solemn Ceremony after this Manner: *Take* (saith God) *an Heifer of three Years old, and a She-Goat of three Years old, and a Ram of three Years old, and a Turtle-Dove, and a young Pigeon.* *Abram* obey'd, and dividing the Beasts, but not the Birds, he laid each Piece one against the other; and when the Fowls came down upon the Carcasses, he drove them away. About Sun-set a deep Sleep seiz'd *Abram*, which affected him with Horror. But God spoke to him, saying, "Know for certain, that thy Seed shall be a
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“ Stranger in a Land that is not theirs, and shall serve
 “ them, who shall afflict them Four hundred Years :
 “ But that Nation which shall afflict them will I judge ;
 “ and afterwards shall they come forth with great Sub-
 “ stance. And thou shalt go to thy Father in Peace ;
 “ thou shalt be buried in a good old Age. But in the
 “ fourth Generation they shall come hither again :
 “ For the Iniquity of the *Amorites* is not yet full.”
 And for a similar Demonstration how this should come
 to pass, the Lord caused two Emblems of all this to
 appear ; first a Smoaking Furnace, (a plain Repre-
 sentation of the heavy Sufferings his Seed should un-
 dergo in *Egypt*,) and a Lamp of Fire, (a lively Em-
 blem of their Deliverance after the Expiration of their
 Four hundred Years Servitude :) ^m These passed be-
 tween the divided Pieces of Flesh.

Sarai having for about ten Years expected a Per-
 formance of God's Promise, and judging according to
 the Course of Nature that her Husband's Issue must
 proceed from some other, and not from her Body, now
 despairing of her own Conception, partly from her
 own great Age, which was seventy-five, and partly
 from a Sense she had that God had restrained her from
 Bearing, ⁿ prevailed with her Husband to take her
 Handmaid ^o *Hagar* to be his ^p Concubinary Wife,
 pleasing herself with the Thought, that if her Maid
 should conceive by her Husband, it would be a Means
 of building up her and her House, in the compleating
 of the Divine Promise.

^m *Gen. xv.*

ⁿ *Prevailed.* This shews the singular
 Chastity of *Abram*, *Gen. xvi. 2.* who could
 not without the Importunity of his
 Wife, be persuaded to take their Servant
 to his Bed !

^o *Hagar.* She is supposed by *St. Chry-*
ostom to have been given by *Pharaoh* to
Abram, whilst he sojourned in *Egypt*,
 and was by the pious Example of her
 Master and Mistress converted to the true
 Faith, and Worship of the true God.

^p *Concubinary.* In Concubinage, those
 Secondary or Half-Wives, were account-

ed lawful and true Wives, and their Issue
 reputed legitimate, and they had a law-
 ful Right to the Marriage-Bed, and might
 justly claim the Privilege thereof as well
 as the chief Wife : Yet in all other Re-
 spects they were inferior to her. And
 as they had no Authority in the Family,
 nor Share in Household-Government ; so
 if they had been Servants in the Fami-
 ly before they came to be Concubines,
 they continued to be so afterwards, and
 in the same Subjection to their Mistress
 as before.

Hagar soon conceiv'd by her Master *Abram*; and forgetting her former Condition of a Slave, values her self upon her Conception, and treats her Mistress with ill Manners and Contempt. *Sarai*, who had been the Cause of this *Egyptian's* Advancement, is stung to the Quick at her scornful Carriage, which not being able to bear she complains to her Husband; hinting as if *Hagar* durst not have been so saucy to her without some Incouragement from him, and expostulates with him very sharply about the Matter. But *Abram* to let his Wife *Sarai* see that he would not countenance her in any disrespectful Carriage towards her, delivers *Hagar* into her Power as her Mistress, bidding her do as she pleased with her. *Sarai*, no Doubt, shewed her resentment in some Severity, which we find not particularly express'd: However, it was such, it seems, as *Hagar's* proud Mind could not bear; for she ran away immediately, making the best of her Way to her own Country, which was *Egypt*. As she travelled through the Desert Country, finding a Fountain of Water, she tarried to rest and refresh her self. Here the Angel of the Lord found her, who in his first Address, to put her in Mind of her Relation and Duty, gave her the Appellation of *Sarai's* Maid, plainly denoting that her Advancement to her Master's Bed had not exempted her from her Mistress's Service. Then expostulating with her about her intended Journey, Whither she would go? She told him she fled from her Mistress. The Angel inquired no further; but bid her return to her Mistress, and submit her self to her. And the more to persuade her to a Thing so much against her Inclination, he told her that God would ^a multiply her Seed exceedingly, so that it should not be number'd; and to convince her that he was a Messenger sent on purpose from God to take Care of her, he told her that which none else could tell her, namely, that she was with Child, and should bear a

^a *Gen.* xvi. 10.

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Son, giving her a particular Charge about the Name she should give him, which was *Ishmael*.

Hagar, as has been before noted, having been brought up in *Abram's* Family, was no Doubt instructed in the Knowledge and Fear of the true God, which is plain from her acknowledging that it was God that had visited her: And the Fountain also, at which the Angel found her, was called *Beer-labai-río*, that is, *The Well of him that liveth and seeth me*. And now being in so extraordinary a Manner comforted and admonished, she returned to her Mistress, and being upon her Submission received, she in due Time was deliver'd of a Son, whom, according to the Angel's Direction, *Abram* called *Ishmael*.

At the Birth of this Child *Abram* was eighty and six Years old; and lest he in the Excess of Joy should mistake this Child for the Heir of those great Promises God had before made to him, for a further Trial of his Faith and Obedience, deferred yet thirteen Years longer before that Blessing which should befall him; for in the Ninety ninth Year of *Abram* God appeared to him again, and said, "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, be thou perfect, and I will make my Covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." *Abram* in humble Reverence falling on his Face, God talked farther with him, and, for a further Confirmation of his Faith, told him he should be a Father of many Nations, changing his Name from *Abram* to *Abraham*. At the same Time did God institute Circumcision, as a Seal of the Covenant he now had made with *Abraham*, commanding that every Male-Child of eight Days old, whether born in the House, or bought with Money, should be circumcised in the Foreskin of his Flesh, upon Pain of being cut off from his People. Whereupon *Abraham* and *Ishmael*, and

^r *Abram*. This Name imported a high Father, but his new Name *Abraham* signifies a Father of a great Multitude: As indeed he was; not only the

Twelve Tribes, but the *Ismaelites*, the *Edomites*, and all the Posterity of *Keturah*, descending from him.

all the Men of his Family, were circumcised the same Day. And as God had changed *Abram's* Name to that of *Abraham*, so did he at the same Time change his Wife's Name from ^t *Sarai* to *Sarah*. The Difference in Sound but little, but great in Meaning. And now at the changing of their Names did God promise a Son to *Abram* by his Wife *Sarah*. *I will bless her, (said he,) and give thee a Son also of her.* This was joyful News to *Abraham* indeed, who did not in the least question the Performance of it; but considering that he was at this present a real Father in *Ishmael*, the natural Affection he bore to him as his First-begotten, and Fear that upon the Birth of another he might be deprived of him, made him break forth into this earnest Supplication, *O that Ishmael might live before thee!* God soon dispels these Anxieties of *Abraham*; and to take off his Fondness of advancing *Ishmael* to any Share in the Covenant, assures him that *Sarah* should bear him a Son, whose Name he should call *Isaac*, promising him to establish his Covenant with him for ever, and with his Seed after him. And at the same Time, that he might not seem wholly to reject *Abraham's* Request for *Ishmael*, he adds, *As for Ishmael, I have heard thy Prayer, and have blessed him; he shall be fruitful, and multiply so exceedingly, that he shall beget twelve Princes, and I will make him a great Nation.* And to take off any further Doubt or Scruple of the Performance of these Promises, God appoints a set Time, telling him that *Sarah* should bring forth a Son, the ^t next Year. And to assure him further of it, in a short Time after this God appears to him in another Manner, to confirm him in the Truth of what he had told him: For as *Abraham* one Day sat in his Tent-Door, in the Oak-Grove he espied three Persons, whom he took for Men, coming towards him; whereupon,

^t *Sarai*. *Sarai* signified *My Princess*, *Princess of my Family* only; but *Sarah* signifies a *Princess* indefinitely, at large. *A Mother (or Princess) of many Nations* shall she be, and Kings of People shall come of her, Gen. xvii. 16.

^t See Gen. xvii. 21. & xxi. 2.

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GENESIS CHAP. XVIII.

Abraham entertains three Angels.



GENESIS 18. Verse 13.

*And the LORD said unto Abraham
wherefore did Sarah laugh saying shall
I of a Surety bear a child which am old?*

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rising from his Seat, he went to meet them, and after the Custom of the Country, saluted them by bowing himself to the Ground. And still supposing them to be Men, he is very importunate with them to stay, and take a Repast with him. They readily consented, and he immediately gives Order for an Entertainment, which was accordingly served in, and himself waited at the Table, which was under the Covert of a fine shady Oak. During their seeming Refreshment, one of them asked him where his Wife was; and *Abraham* telling him she was in the Tent, he said, *I will certainly return to thee according to the Time that Women usually go with Child, and Sarah thy Wife shall have a Son.* By which *Abraham* once more was assur'd that this Visit was from Heaven, and that one of them represented God himself. *Sarah* over-heard all that passed in this Conversation; and considering her own and Husband's great Age, she could not believe what was said, having still a greater Regard to the Order of Nature than God's Promise, but laughed within her self at the Improbability of the Matter. For which being reproved by one of their heavenly Guests, tho' she knew herself guilty, she denied that she laughed. But the Lord positively fix'd it upon her, telling her, *Nay, but thou didst^u laugh.*

Upon this the Conversation ceased, and the Company breaking up prepared to be gone, having first assured *Abraham* of God's Return at the promised Time; and he understanding they design'd for *Sodom*, would needs wait on them, and bring them on their Way. As they walked God was pleased to give a singular Instance of his Favour to *Abraham*, in acquainting him

^u *Laugh.* This shews how piercing the Eye of Providence is, from which no Secret can be hid. She thought none could discover her Inclinations or inward Actions; and because she did not laugh outwardly, she therefore persisted in the Denial. Her only Excuse could be, that her Laughter proceeded from her Incre-

dulity, and was not an Act of Scoffing or Contempt. And yet there is a great Difference between *Abraham's* Laughing and *Sarah's* Laughing, tho' much upon the same Occasion: For *Abraham*, when the Promise of a Son by *Sarah* was made to him, *Gen. xvii. 17.* laughed for Joy, and was not reproved.

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with his Purpose concerning *Sodom*; which gracious Act was grounded upon the Assurance he had, that *Abraham* would ^w command not only his Children, but his Household after him, to keep the Way of the Lord, to do Justice and Judgment. Upon which God acquaints him with his Design to ^x destroy *Sodom*, which whilst he was doing the two Angels left them, and went towards *Sodom*; but *Abraham* remained communing with the Lord, and interceding for that wicked City, which this great Condescension of the Lord in communicating his Purpose to *Abraham*, gave him Opportunity to do. He therefore taking for granted that God, the Judge of all the Earth, must do right, proceeded to mediate for *Sodom* in six petitionary Propositions, lessening the Number from fifty to ten; that in case there were but ten just Persons in *Sodom*, he would not destroy it for their Sake. This God at *Abraham's* Intreaty was graciously pleased to grant; and so left *Abraham* to return home.

The other two Guests, who came along with them from *Abraham's* Tent, (and who were indeed Ministering-Angels, that God had ^y appointed to execute Judgment upon the wicked *Sodomites*;) held on their Course towards the City, where they arrived in the Evening. *Lot*, who sat in the Gate of the City, seeing them, went to meet them, and having saluted them invited them to his House to refresh and repose themselves that Night; which they at first declined, but by his Importunity were prevailed upon to accept.

^w Command. See Gen. xviii. 19.

^x Destroy. Here is another great Instance of God's Patience, who, tho' he knew all without Inquiry, yet would not condemn even the most flagitious without due Examination and Trial. Before the Flood God proceeded against the old World upon ocular Evidence: God saw that the Wickedness of Man was great, Gen. vi. 5. & 12. So also at the Building of *Babel* it is said, The Lord came down to see the City and the Tower, which

the Children of Men built, Gen. xi. 5. And now again, before the Destruction of *Sodom*, tho' the Cry against *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* was great, because of the Grievousness of their Sin, yet the Lord would not proceed against them upon Generals; or upon common Fame, but I will go down, saith the Lord; and see whether they have done altogether according to the Cry of it: and if not I will know, Gen. xviii. 21. ^y Appointed, See Gen. xix. 19.

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During their Entertainment, the Men of *Sodom* in a very mutinous and riotous Manner incompass'd the House, and commanded *Lot* to bring forth his new Guests, that they might ² know them. *Lot* thinking by mild and quiet Words to appease his unreasonable Neighbours, steps out of the Door, and shutting it after him, intreats them not to offer any Affront to his Guests: And so great was his Concern for their Safety, that he made an unwary and unwarrantable Offer to the *Sodomites*, to bring out his two Virgin Daughters to them, to do with them as they pleas'd, rather than they should abuse his Guests: Which, though an Error in the good Man, yet shews how sacred the Laws of Hospitality were then held among the virtuous. But the *Sodomites* naturally wicked, and in order to their Destruction grown very harden'd, scorn'd to be directed by him, who was but a late Inhabitant among them, and threatn'd to deal worse with him than with his Guests; and pressing hard upon *Lot*, they intended to force the Door. The heavenly Guests seeing *Lot* so put to it, ingag'd in the Quarrel; and pull'd him into the House, and struck these unnatural Monsters with a Blindness, which so puzzl'd them that they could not find the Door: Which when they had shut again, they inquired of *Lot* what Family he had; and letting him know that the Destruction of that Place was now determin'd, and that God had sent them to destroy it, they bid him take all his Family and Relations, with whatsoever he had in that Place, and bring them out.

Upon this Admonition *Lot* went out, and spake to those that were to ³ marry his Daughters, and advis'd

² *Know them.* That is, abuse them in that unnatural and filthy Manner which was afterwards expressly forbidden in the Law, *Levit. xviii. 22.* and thereby made capital, *ch. xx. 13.* Which vile Sin continued among the *Gentiles* even to the Apostles Time, (as may be gather'd from *Rom. i. 27.* and *1 Cor. vi. 9.*) and was so generally practis'd amongst the People of *Sodom*, that from thence it took the Name *Sodomy*, and the Practisers thereof

are called *Sodomites*, both in Holy Scripture, (*1 Kings xiv. 24.* & *xv. 12.* *2 Kings xxiii. 7.*) and our *English Laws*, which (as did the Law of God of old) do yet make the Punishment of Death.

³ *Marry, &c.* Some Translators render it, *Which were to marry his Daughters.* It is very probable they were contracted or betrothed to Husbands; but the Marriage not consummated by Cohabitation.

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them to go with him to avoid the common Destruction: But to little Purpose; for they looked upon all he said as a Jest. By this Time the Night was far spent; and as soon as the Day began to break the Angels hasten'd Lot to be gone, saying, *Arise, take thy Wife and thy two Daughters, lest ye be destroyed in the Iniquity of the City.* Lot was still for delaying, hoping the Fate of this wretched People might be reversed. But in vain; instead of ten righteous Persons that *Abraham* capitulated for, but four, and they of Lot's Family, (including himself,) were thought worthy to escape the dreadful Judgment design'd for this Place. The Angels therefore seeing Lot's Linging, took him, his Wife and Daughters, by Force, and brought them out of the City, bidding them hasten for their Lives, and charging them not to look behind them, nor make any Stop in the Plain but to escape to the Mountain, lest they shared in the common Fate. Lot looking forward, and seeing the Mountain was far distant, intreated the Angels that he might be excused from flying so far, and be permitted only to go to a little City hard by, which was then called ^a *Bela*. They granted his Request, and that City being saved for his Sake, he was commanded to hasten thither; for, said the Angel, I ^b will not do any Thing towards the Destruction of *Sodom* and the other Cities till thou be secured.

^a *Bela*. This *Bela* was the Seat of one of those five Kings, who fought the first Battle with the four Kings, and were beaten in the Vale of *Siddim*, *Gen.* xiv. 2.

^b *Will not*. Translators often give Occasion, especially to the Unlearned, for whom they are chiefly design'd, to imagine that *Jesus* had not Power enough to work Miracles in *Nazareth*, *Mark* vi. 5. *John* xii. 39. &c. and here in this Text, (not to mention many others,) where 'tis said, *That God could not do any Thing to Sodom till Lot had left it.* Tho' Commentators and Preachers have not fail'd to observe that his Expression does not always denote an absolute impossibi-

lity to do any Thing, but only a Design or Will not to do it, or a Repugnancy to the doing of it. But yet it is certain that *Christ*, if he had pleased, could have wrought Miracles in *Nazareth*, and that God too could have destroyed *Sodom* independently of Lot: And all this Importency is to be attributed to the Want of Will. And therefore since People are so apt to take these Places literally, it is proper they should be render'd, *They would not*, and not, *They could not*; the last of which is an ambiguous Expression, and naturally gives us an Idea which is contrary to the Design of the sacred Writers.

GENESIS CHAP. XIX.
Lot Journeying to Zoar



GENESIS 19. Verse 26.

But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a Pillar of salt.

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The Injunction laid on *Lot*, his Wife, and Daughters, upon their Escape was, That they should not look behind them, nor tarry in the Plain, but hasten to the Mountain. Yet before *Lot* could reach the little City of *Bela*, which was afterwards called *Zoar*, his Wife, either forgetting what the Angel had said, or out of Love to the Place of her Habitation, looked back, and became a Pillar of ^c Metallick Salt, a lasting Monument of God's Vengeance on obstinate and unbelieving Offenders.

Lot's Wife being thus made a dreadful Example of Fondness to what God had forbidden, he with his Daughters proceeds in his Flight to *Zoar*, where he arrived by Sun-rise. And now being out of Danger, God prepares his Judgments against *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and the rest of the sinful Cities of the Plain: The angry Heavens pour down Showers of liquid Fire, which in an Instant devour'd those guilty Wretches. ^d *Lot* seeing that other Cities of the Plain besides *Sodom* were destroyed, thinking himself not safe in *Zoar*, withdrew to the Mountains to which he was first directed, and there dwelt in a Cave with his two Daughters; where the greatest of Mischiefs befel him, no less than that of Incest; for his two Daughters having lost their espoused Husbands in *Sodom*, and despairing of ever

^c Salt. All the Versions say that *Lot's* Wife became a Pillar of Salt. *Gen. xix. 26.* And, as *Josephus* assures us, that it was to be seen in his Time, and that several modern Travellers relate that it is still to be seen between Mount *Engaddi* and the *Dead-Sea*. Interpreters do observe that we must not take the Salt here mentioned for common Salt, but for a Metallick Salt which was hewn out of the Rock like Marble, and was made use of to build Houses, according to the Testimony of several famous Authors. But since by the Word Salt we always understand common Salt, which Water soon dissolves, and could not continue so long, being exposed to Wind and Rain, the Word Metallick should have been joined with Salt in the Version, to take away the

Ambiguity. This made *Vatablus* and *Bodinns* take this Expression in a metaphorical Sense, as a firm and sure Covenant is called a *Covenant of Salt*, *Num. xviii. 19: 2 Chron. xiii. 5.* And this Sense should be expressed in a Translation, to give no Advantage to *Atheists* and *Libertines*.

^d *Lot*. God's Favour in preserving *Lot* was very great: But yet it is not altogether to be imputed to *Lot's* Virtue; for we must consider that *Lot* was very near of Kin to *Abraham*, and very much esteemed by him, and no Doubt *Lot* fared the better for *Abraham's* Sake; for it is said, *Gen. xix. 29. When God destroyed the Cities of the Plain, he remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the Midst of the Destruction, &c.*

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having any others, (for they thought all Mankind were destroyed in the late Conflagration, but their Father and themselves,) plotted together to betray their innocent Father, under the Pretence of preserving the Race of Mankind. They had lived in *Sodom*, and, 'tis to be fear'd, had learned too much of the Licentiousness of the Place. However they might be instigated, 'tis certain they had a very unnatural Design upon their Father; and considering his great Virtue, they knew they could not persuade him to commit so great a Wickedness so long as he retained his Reason, therefore they intend by an intoxicating Draught to deprive him of his Sense, though not of his natural Strength. The eldest Daughter being the most forward in this wicked Contrivance, having represented to her Sister the Condition they were in, proposed the Expedient to her, which was to make their Father drunk with Wine, and then to lie with them. The younger as readily imbraced what the elder as wickedly proposed: And accordingly having sufficiently stupified the old Man with Wine, and put him to Bed, the eldest went to Bed to him; and having obtain'd her End of him, she rose again, he not preceiving when she lay down, or when she arose. The next Night the younger Daughter takes her Turn, and both succeeded alike in their vile and abominable Project; for they were both with Child by their Father, and had each of them a Son from that incestuous Congress. Thus was *Lot*, though the unwitting Instrument of their Generation, both a Father and Grandfather to his Daughters Children; but, as if he abhor'd this incestuous Breed, we do not find that he took so much Notice of them as to give them a Name; for the Mothers named them, the elder calling her Son *Moab*, and the younger her Son *Ben-ammi*; both mischievous Enemies in After-times to *Israel*, especially the *Moabites*. Thus much of *Lot*, of whom sacred History gives us no further Account.

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Return we now to *Abraham*, who abode in *Mamre* till he had seen the Destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; soon after which he removed more Southward, and fix'd in *Gerar*, the chief City of the *Philistines*. Here again the same Apprehension possessed him about *Sarah* his Wife, as before, and therefore he had Recourse to his former Policy, and by Agreement he was to call her Sister, and she him Brother. The ^e King of *Gerar* supposing *Sarah* to be no other than *Abraham*'s Sister, caused her to be taken from him, intending to ^f keep her for himself. But God appeared to that Prince in a Dream, and told him he should be punished with Death for the Woman he had taken, because she had an Husband. *Abimelech* excused himself, alledging that *Sarah* and *Abraham* had given out they were Brother and Sister. And calling for *Abraham*, he reproves him smartly; demanding why he imposed so on him, who never offer'd any Ill to him; but rather did him all the kind Offices of a Friend? *Abraham*'s Excuse was, that he did it to save his Life, though at the same Time he told him no Lie in saying she was his Sister, for she was the Daughter of his Father, but not of his Mother. *Abimelech* thus admonished by God is easily reconcil'd; for he not only restored *Abraham* his Wife with a Royal Present, and Leave to dwell in what Part of the Country he liked best, but paid an extraordinary Compliment to *Sarah* in these Words, "Behold I have given to thy Brother

^e King. The King of *Gerar*'s Title was *Abimelech*, as that of the Kings of Egypt was *Pharaoh*, and that of the Roman Emperors *Cesar*.

^f Keep. *Sarah* was now ninety Years old when *Abimelech* took her into his Family; whence it may seem very strange that a Woman of her Age should bear her Years so well, as to be desired by a King, who in those Times might command the most youthful Beauties in his Dominions. But, according to Interpreters and Commentators, People of ninety in those

Days were as fresh and vigorous as those of forty now. But besides, *Sarah* might probably retain her Beauty upon the Account of her Sterility; whereas frequent Child bearing, giving Suck, &c. very much impair the natural Strength and Beauty of Women. Others, as *Procop*, are of Opinion that God having taken off *Sarah*'s Barrenness, her Beauty return'd with her Fruitfulness: For by this Time it may be supposed that *Sarah* had conceived that promised Seed which was to be *Abraham*'s Heir,

“ a * thousand Pieces of Silver, which is to thee a
 “ Covering of the Eyes to all that are with thee, and
 “ to all others, for thou art fully & justified.” Then,
 upon *Abraham's* Prayer, God took off from *Abimelech* that *Disability* by which he had restrained him
 from *Sarah*; and also restored to his Wife and Wo-
 men their former Fertility, which on that Occasion
 he had before stopp'd.

And now the Time appointed being come, God
 gives a miraculous Instance of his Power and Justice
 in blessing *Abraham* with a Son, whose Birth was won-
 derful considering the Age of his Parents. But his
 Justice exacted the Performance of his Promise, who
 cannot be unjust. *Sarah* is delivered of a Son, which
Abraham according to former Direction called ^h *Isaac*,
 and circumcised him when he was eight Days old.
 Who can express the Joy of this ancient Pair? Who
 will distrust God's Promises? Now might *Sarah* laugh
 with Comfort, and not in Distrust as she did before.

* *Thousand, &c.* By Pieces of Silver
 here are meant the Common or Civil *She-
 kels*, which are but half the Value of the
Shekels of the *Sanctuary*. Therefore the
 thousand *Shekels* which *Abimelech* gave to
Abraham amounted to about Fifty seven
 Pounds seven Pence Half-penny English.

& *Justified*. Our Translators have com-
 mitted a double Mistake in rendring that
 which *Abimelech* says to *Sarah*, *Gen. xx. 16.*
Behold I have given thy Brother a thousand
Pieces of Silver: Behold he is to thee a Co-
vering of the Eyes to all that are with
thee, and with all others. Thus was she
reproved. For, *First*, The Word which
 they render *reproved* never has that Mean-
 ing, but signifies to *search* or *inquire* into
 a Thing till it is cleared, and put out of
 Doubt. *Secondly*, There was no need
 then for a Reproof; for *Abraham* had
 already fully justified *Sarah*, *v. 12.* and
Abimelech had accepted of his Defence.
Thirdly, *Abimelech* was so far from irri-
 tating *Abraham* or *Sarah* by Reproaches,
 that on the contrary he endeavour'd to
 win their Friendship by a very consider-
 able Present: Nay, before *Abimelech* was
 satisfied, his Reproaches to *Abraham* were
 rather obliging Remonstrances than bit-

ter Invectives, *v. 9, 10.* He therefore
 declares that *Sarah* was fully justified, as
 the *Septuagint* and *Chaldee Paraphrase* have
 render'd it.

But there is another Mistake in the
 Translation of this Text; for it is of
Abraham that it says, *He was a Cover-*
ing to the Eyes of Sarah; whereas the O-
 riginal says this of the thousand Pieces of
 Silver, which were a publick Testimony
 that *Abimelech* render'd to her Virtue, as
 the Veils of the Hebrew Women were the
 Symbols of their Modesty, whereas the
 Harlots went open-fac'd. So that this
 Present rather regarded *Sarah* than *Abra-*
ham, to whom that Prince had already
 given Sheep and Oxen, and Men-Ser-
 vants and Women-Servants, and restored
 him *Sarah* his Wife, giving him like-
 wise an Offer of settling in any Place of
 his Country. *Abimelech's* Design then by
 this Liberality was to justify *Sarah's* Vir-
 tue to them who belonged to her, and to
 all others, it being then usual to give Pre-
 sents to confirm the Truth of any Thing
 that might be called in Doubt, as may
 be seen, *Gen. xxi. 30.*

^h *Isaac*. Which signifies *Laughter*.

The

The Birth of *Isaac*, as it was Matter of great Joy to *Sarah*, was, no Doubt, a great Disappointment to *Hagar*, who, from her Mistress's great Age, might naturally conclude she would have no Child, and therefore promised her self the Satisfaction that her Son should be *Abraham's* Heir. This Disappointment soon grew up to a Resentment, which could not long lie hid in Mother or Son; for after *Isaac* was wean'd, and grown up a little, his watchful Mother catch'd *Ishmael* ⁱmocking him. *Sarah* could by no Means bear to have her Son derided by the Son of a Bond-woman, therefore she was very importunate with *Abraham* to turn both Mother and Son out of Doors, hinting to him that her Son was to be the Heir of the Covenant, not the Slave's Son. This put *Abraham* upon a very difficult Dilemma: He was fond of *Ishmael*, whose infant Familiarity had very much engag'd him to the Child. But God, who always had a great Regard to *Abraham's* Quiet and Good, soon made it easy to him; bidding him not to be solicitous about the Bond-woman and her Son, but to mind what his Wife advised him to, confirming what she said, That *Isaac* was to be his Heir; assuring him at the same Time, that because *Ishmael* was his Son he would make him considerable in the World.

Once more *Hagar* turns Wanderer, but by Compulsion: The Almighty will have it so, and *Abraham* must obey. His Fondness for *Ishmael* must give Way to God's Promises, which were his only Comfort at this sad Separation. All her Equipment of Provision was only some Bread, and a Bottle of Water, with which she sets out, wandering in the Wilderness of *Beer-sheba*.

ⁱ Mocking. It is reasonable to suppose that this Mocking might be upon the Account of the Heirship, *Ishmael* scorning that this Youngster, so much his Inferior in Years, should take the Inheritance from him; and so upon this derided him: And that *Hagar*, *Ishmael's* Mother, did countenance him, if not tutor him to it. For

she was to be cast out as well as he; which it's probable, would not have been, if she had not been faulty. This may reasonably be supposed from her former Deportment upon her conceiving *Ishmael*, when she carried her self very haughtily to her Mistress,

till her Water was spent, and in vain searching for a Supply in that parched Country, she in Despair lays the Child, fainting with Thirst, at the Foot of a Tree, her self retiring a little Distance from him, that she might not see him die. In vain his feeble Tongue calls on his mourning Mother, who can only answer him with Tears; he cries, she weeps, and in an alternate melancholy Harmony they echo their sad Distress to one another. But the boundless Pity, which alone can help when all human Means fail, bids the weeping Mother dry up her Tears, and fear no more; for he had heard their Prayers, and would make the Child the Father of a mighty People. Then *Hagar* looking about her found a Well of Water, and she gave the Child Drink, which refreshed him, God afterwards providing for him. And here they both took up their Abode in the Wilderness of *Paran*, where *Ishmael* became an expert Archer, by which Employment it is probable he got Provisions to sustain his Mother and himself. And when he was grown to Man's Estate, his Mother, being her self an *Egyptian*, took him a Wife out of the Land of *Egypt*.

Abraham being so kindly treated by *Abimelech*, and invited to dwell in his Country, accepts his Offer; and *Abimelech* seeing how visibly God blessed *Abraham* in all his Undertakings, and that he grew very powerful, he takes *Phicol*, the General of his Forces, and made a League with him, fearing lest, as *Abraham* became more powerful, he might attempt something in Prejudice of him, or his Successors in the Government. This League thus made, and confirmed by an ^k Oath between them, and a little Difference composed about a Well of Water which *Abraham* had digged, and *Abimelech's* Servants without their Master's Knowledge had forcibly seized, but was now upon *Abraham's* Com-

^k Oath. This being the first Mention we have in Story of an Oath or Swearing from the Creation to that Time, it

may be observ'd that Swearing was introduced by an Heathen.

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plaint restored, *Abraham* made a Present to *Abimelech* of some Sheep and Oxen, who with his General *Phicol* took Leave, and return'd. But *Abraham* intending to settle for some Time in that Country, planted a Grove in *Beersheba*, and there called on the Name of the Lord, the everlasting God.

Amongst all the Circumstances and Trials of *Abraham's* Faith and Obedience, the greatest that ever befel him was that of being commanded to sacrifice his Son. *Ishmael*, once the Delight of his Heart, and Joy of his declining Age, is now no more to him, being obliged by the divine Mandate to banish him his Presence; and now *Isaac*, the Son of his Joy, whom he so dearly loved, who had been conceived beyond the Course of Nature, and in whom God had promised that all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed, must bleed by the Appointment of the Almighty. This was a severe Trial to human Nature: But God's Command made it easy. *Abraham* neither disputes nor delays; but early in the Morning set forward on his Journey, accompanied only with his Son *Isaac*, and attended with two Servants, who led an Ass that carried the Wood, and other Instruments for the Sacrifice, as well as Provisions for themselves, having three Days Journey to go, as far as the Land of ^m *Moriah*.

¹ Grove. The Critics generally agree in the use of Groves, as either for Refreshment, or Places of Worship; but *Elwood* makes the most useful Observation on this Text of any, p. 30. By this, says he, we may see how apt the Customs of the Places we live in, and of the People we converse with, are to steal and prevail upon even good Men: By an Heathen King, *Abraham* was just before drawn to swear; and from the Heathen's Practice he now plants a Grove to perform his Devotions in. For that it was the Custom of the Heathen to plant Groves, and therein to set up their Idols and Altars, will appear from the Command afterwards given to *Israel* to destroy their Altars, break down their Images and cut down their Groves, *Exod.* xxxiv. 13. and to burn their Groves with Fire, *Dent.* xii. 3. And they were

forbidden to plant any themselves to perform their Devotions in, *Dent.* xvi. 21. And when the Kings of *Israel* departed from God, they set up Groves; and it was one of *Ahab's* provoking Sins that he made a Grove, *1 Kings* xvi. 33. But though *Abraham* herein followed the Custom of the *Philistines*, among whom he lived, yet the Object of his Worship was the true God, *Jehovah* the Everlasting God.

^m *Moriah*. That is, *The Fear of the Lord*. This is the Place where *Jerusalem* after stood: For Mount *Moriah*, where *Abraham* was to offer his Son, is by some thought to be Mount *Sion*, on which *Solomon* built the Temple, where God commanded the Offerings to be made, *2 Chron.* iii. v. 1.

On the third Day they came within Sight of the Place; when *Abraham* order'd his Servants to ^a stop, telling them he and his Son would go and worship, and come to them again. The innocent Child, ignorant of what his pious Father intended to do with him, goes on chearfully; and the faithful Patriarch, having by the Strength of his ^o Dependance on God's Promises overcome those Pangs of natural Affection, which otherwise might have made him hesitate in the Performance of this bloody Act, went on with a Resolution answerable to his Faith and Obedience. Thus they walked together; but *Isaac*, who saw the Wood and Instruments provided for the Sacrifice, and no Lamb for a Burnt-offering, innocently asked his Father where he would have a Lamb? To which the Father prophetically replied, *My Son, God will provide himself a Lamb for a Burnt-offering.* *Abraham*, being come to the Place God had told him of, builds an Altar, and having laid the Wood in Order, bound his Son *Isaac*, and laid him upon the Wood on the Altar. *Isaac* being at that Time at least three and thirty Years of Age, (tho' he was then called Lad and Child,) was capable of making Resistance; but whether being by his Father made acquainted with God's Command, or being naturally subject and obedient to his Parents, he quietly submitted, yielding implicitly to whatsoever his Father would do with him.

All Things being thus prepared, *Abraham* stretches out his Hand with the Knife in it to give the fatal Stroak; when Heaven regarding the Father's Piety, and the Son's Obedience, timely interposes, and, with a Reduplication of his Name, charges him not to hurt

^a Stop. Probably to prevent any Disturbance the Servants by their Tenderness might give him, if they should see him go to sacrifice his Son.

^o Dependance. From what the Apostle says, *Heb. xi. 19.* may be gather'd, that *Abraham* had so steady a Faith in God's Omnipotence, that though he neither

knew nor expected any other but that *Isaac* should certainly have been sacrificed; yet he believed that God, who had so miraculously given him, and promised to make him a *Father of many Nations*, would, to make his Promise good, restore him to Life again.

GENESIS CHAP. XXII.

Abraham is forbidden to slay Isaac.



GENESIS 22. Verse 11.

And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham.. And he said, Here am I. 54.



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the Child, adding this divine Applause of his Faith, *Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not with-held thy Son, thine only Son, from me.* *Abraham*, not a little surpriz'd at the Voice, turns about to see whence it came, and spies a Ram caught in a Thicket by the Horns, which he immediately took and offer'd up for a Burnt-offering instead of his Son: A happy Exchange! Upon this compleat Obedience of *Abraham's*, it pleased the Lord to renew his Promise to him with great Amplifications, and confirm it to him by Oath. Whereupon *Abraham* returning with his Son *Isaac* to his Servants, they joyfully go together to *Beersheba*, at that Time the Place of *Abraham's* Residence; where he is no sooner arrived, but he is welcom'd home with the happy News of the Increase of his Family; for *Milcab*, his Brother *Nabor's* Wife, had made him the glad Father of eight Children, among which was *Bethuel*, the Father of *Rebecca*, who was afterwards Wife to *Isaac*.

It's not certainly known how long *Abraham* abode at *Beersheba*; but the next Place where we hear of him was at *Kiriath-arba*, afterwards called *Hebron*, in the Country of *Canaan*; where he buried his Wife *Sarah* in the hundred and twenty seventh Year of her Age. For whom having observed the usual Ceremonies of mourning, he address'd himself to the *Hittites*, desiring a Burying-place for his Dead. They, not understanding his Meaning, with great Coarseness answer'd, He might bury in what Sepulchre he pleas'd. But this would not do *Abraham's* ⁹ Business: For he propos'd to buy a Piece of Ground for a separate Sepul-

¹ *Hittites*. The *Hittites* were descend-
ed from *Heth*, the Son of *Canaan*, and
Grandson of cursed *Ham*, *Gen. x. 6. 16.*
and did then possess that Country.

⁹ *Business*. *Abraham* knew the Lord
had called him forth from among his Ido-
latrious Kindred, and from his Father's
House, *Gen. xii. 1.* and given him the Co-
venant of Circumcision, *Ch. xvii. 9, 10, &c.*
whereby he had distinguish'd him and his

Seed from all other People: And that
therefore it was not lawful for him to
mix with any of the other Nations
which did not worship the true God.
As therefore he afterwards took especial
Care that his Son *Isaac* might not mar-
ry with any of the Daughters of the *Ca-
naanites*; so now he was wary not to bury
his Dead promiscuously among theirs.

chre for himself and Family; and therefore desired them to intreat *Ephron*, the Prince of the Country, to sell him the Cave of *Macpelah*, offering to give the full Worth of it. *Ephron* being a generous Prince, tho' a Heathen, offered *Abraham* not only the Cave, but the whole Field also, that he might bury his dead without Delay. But *Abraham*, not willing to bring himself under so great an Obligation, or be at an Uncertainty about the Piece of Ground, urged *Ephron* to fix a Price; who seeing him pressing, told him, since he would purchase it, the Ground was worth ^r four hundred Shekels of Silver, which being so inconsiderable a Trifle between Men of Rank and Condition, he desired he would make no Words about it, but accept it, and bury his Dead without any more to do. *Abraham* having got the Price, never offers to beat it down, but immediately paid the Money by ^r Weight to *Ephron* in the Presence of the People, and the Field was, according to the Custom of those Times and Places, formally conveyed and made sure to *Abraham*, and to his Heirs for ever: And till then did not *Abraham* bury his Wife there.

Abraham, being at this Time near an hundred and forty Years old, was desirous to see his Son *Isaac* married and settled in the World before himself died. Therefore calling his eldest Servant to him, who was his chief Steward, he laid a strict Charge upon him that he would not take a Wife for his Son of the Daughters of the *Canaanites*; but obliged him to go into his own (meaning *Abraham's*) Country, and bring a Wife from thence of his own Kindred. And to ingage his Steward to a punctual Performance of his

^r Four, &c. Supposing the Shekel here mentioned to be the common Shekel, (as being used before the Law, and in a Civil and Sacred Case,) it was worth of our *English* Money one Shilling and three Pence, or very near it.) After which Computation the four hundred Shekels amount-

ed to five and twenty Pounds Sterling. ^r Weight. In those early Ages of the World, as they had Money in Bullion unstamp'd, so it pass'd by Weight, rather than by Tale; and a Shekel had its Name from *Shakal*, which signifies to weigh or put in the Balance.

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Charge, he made him take a solemn Oath of Fidelity, the Ceremony whereof was then performed by the Servant's putting his Hand under his Master's 'Thigh; which with some Conditions and necessary Cautions he did. After which, receiving his Master's Instructions, he set out with a Retinue of Servants and Camels suitable to his Master's Quality and Estate, and the Business he went about. No Doubt it was one great Part of the Steward's Charge to go first to *Haran* in *Mesopotamia*, his Brother *Nabor's* City, because he heard before that *Milcab* his Wife's Sister, who was married to his Brother *Nabor*, had born him several Children, one of which, named *Bethuel*, had a Daughter, named *Rebecca*.

Eliezer, for that was the Steward's Name, arriving one Evening at *Haran*, caused his Camels to rest themselves by a Well of Water without the City: About which Time it was usual for the Women to come out of the City to draw Water at that Well. *Eliezer*, who had been religiously brought up, and instructed by his Master *Abraham* in the Fear of God, knowing of how great Concern the Business he went about was, had his Mind continually on God, begging his Direction and Success in this weighty Affair; and fearing lest in a Matter of so great Moment he should mistake the Person, he humbly besought the Lord to direct him by a Sign, that he might make a right Choice for his young Master. The Sign he desired was, That she, who at his Request did let him drink of her Pitcher, and offer to give his Camels drink also, should be the Person whom the Lord had appointed for his Servant

'Thigh. Among the various Ways of Swearing, sometimes he that took the Oath did put his Hand under the other's Thigh which administer'd it: As the Case here between *Abraham* and his Steward, Gen. xxiv. 2. and afterwards between dying *Jacob* and his Son *Joseph*, Gen. xlvii. Which Ceremony some interpret to bear a Token of Subjection; others as a Mystery of Circumcision, the Sign

whereof they bore about that Part of their Body: Others more probably think it to be a mysterious Signification of Christ the promised Seed, who was to come out of *Abraham's* Loins or Thigh, Gen. xlv. 6. which is a modest Expression of the sacred Historian; for says one, *per femur five coxam, partes etiam genitales qua in femora sunt, tacite intelliguntur.*

Isaac.

Isaac. The honest Man's Request is no sooner made than heard; for he presently spies *Bethuel's* Daughter come out of the City with her Pitcher upon her Shoulder to ^u fetch Water. After she had filled her Pitcher at the Well, and was coming away, *Eliezer* went to her, and desired a Draught of her Water. She courteously consented, and not only for himself, but for his Camels too, if they would drink. *Eliezer* permitted this, which in good Manners otherwise he would not have done, but only to be convinced of the Sign he had desired.

After the Camels had drank, *Eliezer* viewing the Damsel well, and seeing her exceeding beautiful, with abundance of Joy presents her with a Pair of golden Ear-Rings, and a Pair of Bracelets for her Hands; asking her at the same Time whose Daughter she was, and whether there were Room in her Father's House for him and his Company to lodge that Night. She, to his great Astonishment, tells him she was the Daughter of *Bethuel*, the Son of *Nabor* by *Milcab*; assuring him at the same Time, that they had both Room and Accommodations for him and his Camels.

Eliezer was still more and more surpriz'd with these Crowds of Joy succeeding each other; insomuch that being deeply affected with a Sense of God's Goodness in guiding him so directly to the House of his Master's Brethren, he bowed down his Head in humble Acknowledgment, and worshipped the Lord, saying, *Blessed be the Lord God of my Master Abraham, who hath not withdrawn his Mercy and Truth from him.* The Damsel leaves *Eliezer* in this Rapture, and ran Home to acquaint her Friends with what had happen'd, but

^u *Fetch.* Great was the Simplicity and Humility of those early Ages, when Persons of the best Rank, and of the female Sex too, did not disdain to be employed in such servile Offices. Thus in the following Age *Jacob* found his Cousin *Rachel* following and watering her

Father *Laban's* Sheep; and some Ages after that the seven Daughters of *Jethro*, who was a Prince as well as a Priest of *Midian*, kept their Father's Flocks, and used to draw Water, and fill the Troughs for the Cattle.



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GENESIS CHAP. XXIV ¹³

Rebekah gives drink to Abraham's servant.



GENESIS 24 Verse 18.

*And she said, Drink my Lord: & she
hasted, and let down her pitcher upon
her hand, & gave him drink. 58.*

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soon returned with her Brother *Laban*, who could not but expect something extraordinary from the Bracelets on his Sister's Hands, and from the Account she gave him of the Man that presented them to her. *Laban* hasted to the Well, and saluting the Man in the Stile of "*Thou Blessed of the Lord*", invited him in, telling him there was Preparation made for him and his Camels. The Man thereupon went in; and whilst they were preparing an Entertainment for him and his Company, he declared he would not take any Refreshment till he had told the Errand he was sent on; and having delivered his Credentials by telling to whom he belonged, he gave a general Account of his Master's Estate, and then goes on with his Business. "*Sarah* my Master's Wife, says he, bare him a Son when she was old, unto whom he hath given all that he hath. And my Master being old made me swear that I should not take a Wife for his Son of the Daughters of the *Canaanites*, but that I should go to his Father's House, and to his Kindred, to take a Wife for his Son." Then he gave them an Account of his whole Journey, the Manner of his Meeting with *Rebecca*, and how signally the Hand of divine Providence had appeared in directing him thither; concluding thus, "And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my Master, tell me; * if not, that I may turn to the Right-Hand, or to the Left.

† *Laban*, who took upon him to give *Eliezer* an Answer, entertain'd a right Apprehension of the Matter at first, declaring it was God's doing; "There-

* *Thou, &c.* This was the usual Form of Salutation in those Times to such as they design'd to shew more than ordinary Respect to.

† *If not, &c.* Meaning that they should not hold him in Suspence, but let him know their Minds whether they would bestow *Rebecca* on his Master's Son, or not; that, if not, he might seek out elsewhere.

† *Laban.* It is to be supposed that *Beshmel*, *Rebecca's* Father, either was superannuated, or labour'd under some bodily Infirmary, which render'd him less capable of managing the Affairs of his Family, otherwise we can scarce suppose his Son *Laban* would have taken so much upon him in his Father's House.

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“fore, *says he*, we ² ought not to say any Thing to it. Here is *Rebecca* before thee; if she consent, take her, and let her be thy Master’s Son’s Wife.” *Eliezer* having her Consent, makes his Acknowledgment in a Return of Thanks to the Lord; and making his Presents to her, her Mother and Brother, they went to Supper. Next Morning he desires them to dispatch him back to his Master, being impatient to carry these joyful Tidings. The Brother and Mother being loth to part with *Rebecca* so soon, would have her tarry a little longer; but *Eliezer*, like a diligent as well as faithful Servant, was for hastening Home with her, which, with *Rebecca*’s Consent, he did. Accordingly she prepares for her Journey, being attended with her Nurse *Deborah* and Maid-Servants, and parted with her Relations with this Blessing, “That she might be fruitful, and that her Offspring might have Dominion over their Enemies.”

Whilst the faithful Servant was conveying his fair Charge to his Master’s House, Providence had so order’d it, that *Isaac* walking out in the Evening, to meditate on the Goodness of the Lord, saw his Servants and the Camels upon the Road; whereupon he went forward to meet them. *Rebecca* soon spied him, and asked *Eliezer* who he was. And being informed that it was his Master’s Son, she alighted, and ^a veil’d her self. *Isaac* with great Respect received her, and

² Ought. Our Translation says, *We cannot speak unto thee either Good or Evil*. Commentators indeed do observe that this Expression, *We cannot*, here in *Gen. xxiv. 50.* and in *Gen. xix. v. 22.* That *God could not do any Thing to Sodom till Lot had escaped*, does not always denote an absolute Inability to do any Thing, but only a Design or Will not to do it, because it may not be proper or convenient; and that all this Impotency is to be attributed to the Want of Will. But since People are apt to take these Places literally, they ought to be translated properly and clearly, and after such a Manner

that should leave no Room for Doubts and Mistakes. And therefore when *Leban* answered *Eliezer*, he told him, *They ought not, or would not, say any Thing good or bad to him*; that is, they would not oppose his Demand of having *Rebecca* for Wife to his Master’s Son: And this was manifestly the Effect of their Submission to the Will of God, from whom they did believe *this proceeded*. and they were persuaded they were bound to obey. ^a Veil’d. According to the Custom of those Countries, *Veiling* was a Token of Subjection.

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conducted her to his Mother's Tent, which he allotted for her Apartment. Soon after they were married; and *Isaac* grew so fond of her, that her Charms soon obliterated his Grief for the Loss of his Mother, which to that Time had sat heavy on him.

Isaac being thus happily matched, the good old Patriarch begins to entertain Thoughts of another Wife; and casting his Eyes on his Maid ^b*Keturah*, he took her to his Bed, and she was his concubinary Wife. By her he had six Sons; to each of which he gave Portions in his Life-time, and sent them Eastward, that they might not stand in Competition with *Isaac* for any Part of his Estate, nor settle any where in the Land of *Canaan*, which his Seed by *Isaac* was to inherit.

Isaac was forty Years old when he married, and lived twenty Years with his beautiful Wife before God blessed them with any Issue, which at last he obtained by his importunate Prayers; for *Rebecca* soon after conceived. And when she felt the Children struggling within her (for she had Twins) it somewhat startled her, and made her wonder what the Meaning of it might be. Upon which she went to ^cinquire of the Lord, and received for Answer, "That two Nations (or Heads of Nations) "were in her Womb; and "that two Manner of People should be separated from "her Bowels: That one of those People should be "stronger than the other, and that the Elder should "serve the younger." The Time of their Birth being come, *Rebecca* is first delivered of *Esau*, who was

^b *Keturah*. The Jewish Writers are very fabulous about this *Keturah*, some supposing her to be the same with *Hagar*; but in all Probability she might be dead as well as *Sarah*; and if she had been alive, too old to answer *Abraham's* Design, which was to have more Children. But laying aside Fables and Whim-fies, it is certain from *Gen. xxv. 6.* that *Keturah* was a Servant; for if she had been a free Woman, she would not have been called a Concubine. But besides, the Word Concubine (not only here in *Gen. xv. 6.* but also in *1 Chron. i. 32.*) gives

Occasion to some to suppose that he married her in *Sarah's* Life-time; for Concubine was a Term not usually given to such second Wives as succeed others, but to such as in the Life-time of the first Wife were Partakers of the Marriage-Bed.

^c *Inquire*. This in those Times was usually done by consulting some Prophet: And her Father-in-Law *Abraham* being a Prophet, (for so he is expressly called by God himself, *Gen. xx. 7.*) and then living, it is most probable she inquired of him.

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red and hairy. His Brother *Jacob* followed him so close, that he took hold of his Heel with his Hand. The Boys growing up, *Esau* delighted altogether in the Fields, being addicted to Hunting; and because he furnished his Father with Venison, a Sort of Food of which *Isaac* was very fond, therefore he loved him best. But *Jacob*, who was of a less robust Disposition, was beloved by his Mother, being more conversant with her, and ready at Hand to wait on her. By that Time these Boys were fifteen Years old, their Grandfather *Abraham* took his Leave of this World, being an hundred seventy and five Years of Age, and was buried by his two Sons *Ismael* and *Isaac* in the Cave of *Mackpelah*, in the Field which he had purchased of the Sons of *Heth*, and where about forty Years before he buried *Sarah* his Wife.

As for *Ismael*, *Abraham's* eldest Son, (tho' not his Heir,) he lived many Years after this, till he had attained to an hundred and thirty seven Years. And then leaving, as was ^d foretold of him, twelve Sons, who were all Princes of Nations, and possessed of Towns and Castles, he likewise died. And although he had been such a wild Man that his ^e Hand had been against every Man, and every Man's Hand against him, yet he died at last in the Presence of his Brethren, that is, a natural Death, having his Family and Relations about him.

Esau and *Jacob* being grown to Man's Estate, it happen'd one Day that *Esau*, having fatigued himself extremely in the Field, came fainting to *Jacob*, who at that very Time had just made some Pottage of ^f Lentils, and it was of a red Colour. *Esau*, seeing the Pottage, and his Spirits being very much wasted with Hunger, desired his Brother to let him eat with him, telling him, the more to move him, that he was very faint. *Jacob*, though called a ^g plain or innocent Man, knew how to take Advantage of his Brother's Necessi-

^d Foretold. See *Gen.* xvii. 20.

^e Hand, &c. See *Gen.* xvi. 12.

^f Lentils. A Kind of Pulse, somewhat

like our Vetches, or coarsest Sort of Pease.

^g Plain. See *Gen.* xxv. 7.

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city, and therefore to inflame his Desire the more, which was sufficiently prompted by his present Hunger, and to make *Esau* the more fond of the Bargain by Delays, proposes to him to sell his^h Birth-right, *Esau* through Greediness not considering of what Moment and Advantage his Birth-right was, and consulting only his present Need and Appetite, slightly answers, "Behold I am ready to die, and what Good shall this Birth-right do me?" *Jacob* finding him so indifferent, was not content with his Word, but to make the Bargain sure, will not part with his Pottage till he had obliged his Brother to confirm the Birth-right to him by an Oath. *Esau* never scruples it; and so sold his Birth-right, with all those excellent Privileges that depended on it, for a Mess of Pottage. This in *Esau* is calledⁱ Despising his Birth-right.

Isaac had hitherto made *Beer-sheba* his usual Residence, as his Father *Abraham* had before him; but a Famine happening in that Part of the Country where he lived, he was obliged to remove. Now while he deliberated whither to go, the Lord appeared to him, and charged him not to go down into *Egypt*, but to stay in the Land which he should shew him, promising to be with him, and bless him; and assuring him that he would give all those Countries to him and his Descendants, in Performance of the Oath which he swore to his Father *Abraham*, and that he would cause his Family to multiply as the Stars of Heaven; and Nations of the Earth to account themselves blessed therein, because of the Faith and Obedience of *Abraham*.

Isaac, in Pursuance of the Divine Direction, travels to the Country of the *Philistines*, and fixes in *Gerara*. And here the same Temptation attended him that did

^h Birth-right. Birth-right, or Right of Primogeniture, had many and great Privileges annex'd to it. The First-born was consecrated to the Lord, *Exod. xxii. 29.* was next in Honour and Dignity to the Parents, *Gen. xlix. 3.* had a double Por-

tion allotted to him. *Dent. xxi. 17.* and succeeded in the Government of the Family or Kingdom, *2 Chron. xxi. 3.* and therefore was a Matter of the highest Regard.

ⁱ Despising. See *Gen. xxy. 34.*

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his Father in the same Place; *Rebecca* his Wife was a very beautiful Woman, and he fearing the People would kill him that they might enjoy her, when they asked him what Relation she had to him, told them she was his Sister, an Appellation then common amongst Kindred in almost any Degree. *Isaac* had not long continued unsuspected; for ^k*Abimelech* (or the King) looking out of a Window, saw him so familiar with *Rebecca*, as gave him Cause to think she was his Wife; and sending for *Isaac* he reproved him for imposing upon him, telling him confidently she was his Wife. *Isaac* being thus charged could not deny it, but excus'd himself, saying, he did it to save his Life. The King first blamed him for laying such a Snare for him and his People, saying, "What is this thou hast done?" "One of the People might have lain with thy Wife," and thou wouldst have brought guilt upon us;" and then gave a strict Charge on Pain of Death to all his Subjects, that none should offer any Injury to him or his Wife.

Isaac by this Protection being encouraged to tarry there longer, apply'd himself to Husbandry, wherein he was so successful, that the Land he sowed yielded him a Crop of an Hundred-fold, by which, and God's continual Blessing upon him, he became so wealthy and powerful, that *Abimelech's* Servants grew jealous, and to oblige him to depart the Country, fill'd up the Wells his Father's Servants had digged. *Abimelech* himself was possess'd with the same Jealousy, and therefore spoke to *Isaac* to withdraw to some other Place, because he was grown more potent than himself.

Isaac, as well to secure himself, as make *Abimelech* easy, departs to the Valley of *Gerara*, where he clears the Wells which *Abraham* had formerly caused to be digg'd, and the *Philistines* had fill'd up, giving them the same Names they had before. Here he likewise dig-

^c *Abimelech*. It's very probable this *melech*, King of *Gerara*, with whom *Abraham* had formerly made a Covenant.

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ged a new Well; but a Quarrel happening between the Shepherds of *Gerara*, and those of *Isaac*, the former affirming that those Wells belonged to them, *Isaac's* People quitted it calling that Well *Esek*, which signifies Contention. They likewise digg'd another Well, which was also contested for, and *Isaac* call'd it *Sitnah*, or Hatred. *Isaac* grown weary of such quarrellsome Neighbours removed further from them, and then digg'd another Well, about which there was no Controversy, and therefore he named it *Rebobeth*, which is Spaciousness; for now, said he, the Lord hath given us Room, and we shall increase upon the Earth.

Isaac tarried not long here, but went to *Beersheba*, where the same Night he arrived God appeared to him, comforting and encouraging him, and renewed his Promise to him, to bless him, and multiply his Seed, for his Servant *Abraham's* sake. Then *Isaac* built an Altar there, and worshipped the Lord; and because he intended to reside there for some Time, he ordered his Servants to dig a Well; for in those hot and dry Countries Water was very scarce.

During *Isaac's* abode here, *Abimelech* reflecting how unkindly he had treated him, and by the surly Carriage of his Servants forced him to remove, and justly fearing *Isaac* might resent it, thought it adviseable for preventing future Animosities to make him a Visit, and try if he could draw him into a League of Amity: Therefore taking ¹ *Abuzzath*, one of his Friends, and ^m *Phicol* his General, he went to *Isaac* at *Beersheba*. *Isaac*, to

¹ *Abuzzath*. The Septuagint most properly seem to call this *Abuzzath* the *Paranymp* or *Brideman* of *Abimelech*; for the *Paranymps* were esteem'd the most honourable among them, as being next to the Bridegroom, and they that always conducted them to the nuptial Bed. The *Paranymp* among the *Berrians* was afterwards the next to the King, and was the Person that always crown'd him. And as such we may suppose this *Abuzzath* to have been to *Abimelech*.

^m *Phicol*. This was not that *Phicol* who lived with the former *Abimelech* in

the Days of *Abraham*, mentioned *Gen. xxi. 22.* for that was an Hundred Years before. It is therefore very probable, that as *Abimelech* was the Name for King of the *Philistines*, as *Cesar* was for the *Roman* Emperors, and *Pharaoh* for the Kings of *Egypt*, so this Word *Phicol* was the common Name of their Generals, not Captain of the King's Guard, (for that was *Abuzzath's* the *Paranymp's* Post) as the Word implies, which signifies the Face or Head, as a General is of the Forces he commands.

let them know he was sensible of the Injuries done him, gave them at first but a cold Reception; asking them wherefore they came to see him, whom they had so uncivilly treated? *Abimelech* unwilling to revive old Quarrels, addresses himself with much Respect and Friendship to *Isaac*, telling him, that he was convinc'd of the particular Regard God had for him, and for that Reason desir'd to enter into a League of Friendship with him; assuring him, that he was always his Friend, and wish'd him well, concluding with the pleasing Compellation, *Thou Blessed of the Lord*.

Isaac finding what they aim'd at, and himself being of a quiet and peaceable Temper, entertain'd them with much Respect and Liberality; and the next Morning they made a League, and confirm'd it by a mutual Oath: After which they took a solemn Leave and parted. Let us now return to *Esau*, of whom the last Act that we have recorded is the selling his Birth-right. The next Thing we find of him is his afflicting his pious Parents with ungodly Marriages.

Esau was now forty Years of Age; never very good, but since the Slighting of his Birth-right much worse; tho' he could not be ignorant of the Care his Grandfather took, that his Father might not marry into an idolatrous Family; yet nothing would serve his Turn, but he must take two *Hittites*, *Judith* and *Bashemath* to be his Wives; which was no small Grief to his Parents. And yet naturalⁿ Affection so prevail'd with this good Father, that when he was grown old, and his Sight gone, he called his Son *Esau* to him, and advising him to consider his Age and the Uncertainty of his Life, bid him take his Bow and Quiver, and kill him some

ⁿ *Affection*. Good *Isaac*, swayed by an over-fond Affection to a disobedient and rebellious Son, would have preferr'd the Order of Nature to the divine Will of God, who had expressly declar'd, before *Esau* and *Jacob* were born, that the Elder should serve the Younger. But God would not permit his Purpose to be so

disappointed; and therefore being unwilling to deal hardly with *Isaac*, he permitted him to be impos'd upon by his Wife and younger Son, and thereby drawn to that unwittingly, which to have done knowingly would have caus'd great Uneasiness to him.

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Venison, and make him a savoury Dish, that he might eat thereof, and give him the Blessing appendant to his Birth-right before he died. *Rebecca* overheard what had pass'd between her Husband and her Son *Esau*; wherefore as soon as *Esau* was gone to hunting she called her Son *Jacob* to her; and having told him what she heard his Father say to his Brother, first injoining him a punctual Obedience to all her Directions, she bids him go to the Flock, and fetch from thence two Kids of the Goats, and with them, said she, "I will make such savoury Meat for thy Father as he loves, and thou shalt bring it to thy Father; that he may eat, and bless thee before his Death." *Jacob* had gotten the Birth-right already, and knew that the Paternal Blessing did usually attend it; but he was fearful that if he should get it by indirect Means, he should lose the Blessing and get a Curse instead of it. This Fear was improv'd upon Consideration of the Difference between his Brother's Complexion and his; for *Esau* was hairy, and he was smooth; so that if his Father (to supply his Defect of Sight by Feeling) should handle them, he might easily discover the Cheat. And this he objected to his Mother; who having continually in her Mind the Words of the divine Oracle, [The Elder shall serve the Younger, *Gen. xxv. 23.*] with Assurance answered him, "Upon me be the Curse, my Son, only obey my Voice, and without Delay go fetch me the Kids." *Jacob* very sensible of his Mother's Tenderness towards him disputed her Will no longer, but went and brought the Kids; of which she made such savoury Meat as she knew her Husband lov'd. Then dressing *Jacob* in *Esau's* best Cloaths, and covering his Hands and Neck with the hairy Skins of the Kids, she gave him the Meat to carry to his Father; who, as soon as he heard *Jacob* enter the Room, ask'd, Who art thou? *Jacob* answer'd, "I am *Esau* thy First-born; I have done as thou com-

^o *I am.* It's probable he meant, that of the Purchase he had made of the Pri-
he did represent *Esau*, or stood in the mogeniture or Birth-right of his Brother.
Place of *Esau* the First-born, by Virtue

mandest me, rise, and eat of my Venison, that thy Soul may bless me. *Isaac* wondering that he had made such haste, ask'd him how it came to pass that he had taken the Venison so quickly. *Jacob* reply'd, Because the Lord *P* brought it to me. *Isaac* not willing to trust to his Hearing only, called *Jacob* to come near him, that he might feel him, and thereby know whether he was his very Son *Esau* or not. The good old Man, when he had felt *Jacob*'s Hands, being deceived by the hairy Kids Skins, could not be sure it was *Jacob* or *Esau*, but shew'd his Uncertainty by saying, *The Voice is Jacob's Voice, but the Hands are the Hands of Esau*. Having nothing therefore but his Son's Veracity to depend upon, he put the Question more home to him, "Art thou my very Son *Esau*?" To which *Jacob* more readily than truly answering, *I am*; the good old Man urged no further; but taking him indeed for *Esau*, bid him bring the Meat, that he might eat of it and bless him. *Isaac* having eat of the Venison and drank Wine, calls his Son to come near and kiss him; which when *Jacob* did, his Father smelling the Smell, not only of the Kids Skins, but of the Cloaths he had on, gave his Blessing to *Jacob* in this Manner: "Behold, the Smell of my Son is as
 " the Smell of a Field which the Lord hath blessed:
 " Therefore God give thee the Dew of Heaven, and
 " the Fatness of the Earth, and Plenty of Corn and
 " Wine. Let People serve thee, and Nations bow down
 " to thee. Be Lord over thy Brethren, and let thy Mo-

P Brought. Some will be apt to think that this imposing upon *Isaac*'s Blindness was inexcusable in *Jacob*: but let such consider, that the Blessing being due to the eldest Son, and *Jacob* having bought his Brother's Birth-right, the Blessing (which *Esau* had despised in despising his Birth-right) was due to him; and as for the Lie which they charge upon *Jacob* saying, *The Lord brought the Venison to him*, it's highly probable he meant, that the Lord had put that Invention or Contrivance of the Kids into his Mother's Mind, and by her had brought it to him.

I am. But tho' hitherto *Jacob* might

seem excusable upon the Right of Primogeniture fairly transferr'd to him by Bargain; yet here he is guilty of a positive Lie. And tho' he obtained the Blessing by such Ways and Means, as if they may be excused in him, or he in using them, on the Account that God had appointed the Blessing to him; yet they are not to be imitated, or drawn into Example by any other: Which they ought well to consider who propose the whole Scripture as every Part thereof without Distinction for a standing Rule of both Faith and Practice to all Believers in all Times.

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GENESIS CHAP. XXVII.

Jacob getteth the blessing from Esau.



GENESIS 27. Verse 28.

*GOD give thee of the dew of heaven
and the fatness of the earth, and
plenty of corn and wine.*

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"ther's Sons bow down to thee: Cursed be every one that curseth thee; and blessed be he that bleisseth thee." *Jacob* was no sooner gone from his Father, but *Esau* came in, bringing his Father the Venison dress'd, and said to him, "Arise my Father and eat of thy Son's Venison, that thy Soul may bless me." *Isaac* in great Surprise and Disorder hastily ask'd, Who art thou? To which *Esau* replying, I am thy Son, thy First-born, *Esau*; a very great Trembling seiz'd *Isaac*, so that he called out, "Who, and where is he that hath taken Venison and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him?" And, being by this Time sensible of a Divine ordering Hand therein, added, "Yea, and he shall be blessed." *Esau* hearing this, cried out, and in much Confusion, said to his Father, "Bless me, even me also, O my Father." *Isaac* to excuse himself for having given the Blessing from him, told him, That his Brother had deceived him, and got the Blessing from him. *Esau* complain'd, that his Brother had supplanted him, and having no Hopes to prevail with his Father to reverse the Blessing given to his Brother, said to his Father, "Hast thou not reserved a Blessing for me?" *Isaac* wanted not good Will to *Esau*; but he had emptied the choicest of his Store upon *Jacob*, saying, "I have made him thy Lord, and all his Brethren have I given to him for Servants, and have wish'd him plenty of Corn and Wine: And what shall I now do unto thee, my Son? Alas! said *Esau*, hast thou but one Blessing? Bless me, even me, O my Father." At which Words he not only cried out, but ^r wept also. *Isaac* moved with Compassion for *Esau*, that he might somewhat pacify him, and do as

^r Wept. Long after, the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Ch. xii. 16, 17. took Notice of this, where having brand-ed *Esau* with Prophaneness in despising his Birth-right, and selling it for a Mor-sel of Meat, he observes that, when af-terwards he would have inherited the Blessing, he was rejected: For though he

sought it carefully and with Tears, yet he found no Place of Repentance in his Father: Neither Prayers nor Tears could prevail with *Isaac* to revoke the Blessing he had by Divine Appointment given to *Jacob*, I have bless'd him, said he, yea, and he shall be blessed.

well for him as he could, tells him, “¹ Thy Dwelling
 “ shall be in the Fatness of the Earth, and thou shalt
 “ have of the Dew of Heaven above: Thou shalt live
 “ by thy Sword, and shalt be subject to thy Brother;
 “ but the Time will come when thou shalt shake off
 “ the Yoke.

Esau had conceived such Hatred against his Brother for depriving him of the Blessing, that he resolv’d to be reveng’d; and supposing his Father could not live long, intended as soon as he was dead to murder him. *Rebecca*, being appriz’d of *Esau*’s unnatural Design upon her favourite Son, acquaints *Jacob* with his Brother’s Threats, and advises him to make a Visit to his Uncle *Laban* at *Haran*, and stay there till his Brother’s Rage might be appeased; which when she had observ’d, she would send for him home again. *Jacob*, who was of a mild, and perhaps fearful Disposition, knowing *Esau*’s rugged Temper, was very willing to comply with his Mother’s Proposal, but not to go without his Father’s Consent, which he very much doubted. But *Rebecca* manag’d that Matter cunningly enough; for taking an Opportunity, she politickly complains of the Uneasiness she was under upon the Account of *Esau*’s *Hittite* Wives, urging her Fear, lest his Example should influence *Jacob* to do the like. *Isaac* knew not the Drift of this Complaint, but being a pious Man and knowing that the Promise made to *Abraham*, and renewed to him, was to be compleated in the Issue of *Jacob*, and being careful that he should not corrupt his Blood by mixing with any of those Nations

¹ *Thy Dwelling, &c.* This which is here said to *Esau* looks more like a Prediction of what would befall him, than an Apprecation that they might befall him. To *Jacob* it was said, “ God give thee of the
 “ Dew of Heaven and the Fatness of the
 “ Earth, &c.” But to *Esau*, “ Thy
 “ Dwelling-Place shall be in the Fatness
 “ of the Earth, &c.” And whereas Power and Sovereignty, not only over *Esau* and his Posterity, but more generally over People and Nations, is wished to *Jacob*; *Esau* is told, that he should live by his Sword

(which is but an unquiet, uneasy, and unsafe Course of Life) and should serve his Brother; which must needs grate hard on *Esau*’s haughty Temper. Only for his Comfort it is prophetically added, that he in his Posterity should at one Time or other have a Dominion also; and that then they should break his Brother’s Yoke from off their Necks: Which was begun and attempted in King *Joram*’s Time, 2 Kings x. 22. but not compleated till King *Heracl*’s Time, who was an *Edomite*.

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which were to be destroyed, forthwith call'd *Jacob* to him, and with his Blessing gave him a strict Charge that he should not take a Wife of the Daughters of *Canaan*, but to go to *Padan-aram*, to the House of *Bethuel* his Mother's Father, and from thence take him a Wife of the Daughters of *Laban* his Mother's Brother. And to encourage him, he said, "God Almighty bless thee, "and make thee fruitful and multiply thee, that thou "may'st become a Father of many People; may he be- "stow on thee and thy Race the Blessings promised to "*Abraham*, that thou may'st possess the Land thou art "now in as a Stranger, and which he promised to thy "Grand-father." This Contrivance so luckily suc- ceeding, *Isaac* dispatches his Son away immediately, who accordingly sets out for *Padan-aram*.

Esau understanding that his Father had confirmed the Blessing to his Brother, and sent him to *Padan-aram*, to take a Wife there, with a strict Prohibition not to marry any *Canaanitish* Woman, and that *Jacob* in Obedience to his Parents was gone; reflecting likewise with him- self, that his Father was displeased with him, for having taken those *Hittite* Wives, who were of *Canaanitish* Families, and thinking to re-ingratiate himself with his Father, he went and took *Mahalath*, his Uncle *Isb- mael's* Daughter to be his Wife: Which mended the Matter but little.

Jacob departing from *Beersheba* made the best of his Way to *Haran*, but being benighted, he was forc'd to take up his Lodging in the open Air, where the spang- led Sky was his Canopy, and a hard Stone his Pillow. Whilst he slept, he dream'd he saw a Ladder set upon the Earth, the Top of which reach'd to Heaven, and upon it were Angels ascending and descending. Above it stood the Lord, and said to him, "I am the Lord "God of *Abraham* and of *Isaac*: I will give the Land "whereon thou liest to thee and to thy Issue; which "shall be as numerous as the Dust of the Earth, and "extend to all Parts of it; and all Nations shall be

“ bless’d in thy Posterity. I will be thy Guide where-
 “ soever thou shalt go, I will bring thee back into this
 “ Country, and will not forsake thee, but perform all
 “ that I have promis’d.” This Dream made so great an
 Impression on *Jacob*, that when he wak’d, paying an
 awful Reverence to the Place where he had rested, he
 said, surely the Lord is in this Place, and I did not know
 it. This, in all Probability, was the first Time that
 God had so immediately appeared to him; and which
 affected him with such a religious Fear, that in a holy
 Rapture he said, “ how venerable is this Place! This is
 “ the House of God, and the Gate of Heaven.” Then
 getting up, he took the Stone on which he had slept,
 and set it up for a Monument of God’s Love to him,
 in so eminently appearing and confirming his gracious
 Promises, and as a Mark to know the Place by, when-
 ever he should come that Way again. Having set up
 the Stone he poured ² Oil over it; and in pious Com-
 memoration of the heavenly Vision which he saw here,
 this Place which before was called *Luz* he now calls
 “ *Bethel*, that is, The House of God. But before he
 went from hence he took his Leave in a very solemn
 Manner, for repeating some Part of what the Lord had
 said to him, he made a Vow, the more strongly to bind
 himself to God’s Service, saying, “ If God will be with
 “ me, and direct me in my Journey, and will give me
 “ Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on; so that I come

² Oil. This being the first Mention we have of Oil, either as to the Use, Nature or Name of it, it seems more reasonable to suppose, that he used it here (and so afterwards *Gen. xxxv. 14.*) by Way of religious Consecration, and that rather by divine Instinct and secret Direction from God, than by Imitation or Example from either his Father or his Grand-father; which some think he did. For if either *Abraham* or *Isaac* had used Oil in any of their religious Performances, it may well be thought there would have been some Mention made of it before, as well as now; whereas I do not find it so much as named till now, nor after this (except

once, when *Jacob* returning from *Padan-aram* to this Place again, poured out Oil upon a Pillar then, as he had done now) until God in the Law appointed the Use of it in Consecrations, Offerings, &c. *Which Ceremony* (says one) *signified* ~~Two Things~~. First, That Christ was anointed and consecrated to his Office of Mediatorship, with Fulness of the Holy Ghost. Secondly, That the Anointing of the Spirit is, that which makes us and all our Service acceptable to God.

³ *Bethel*. It is the very Place where afterwards was built the Town of that Name, of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, on the Borders of the Tribe of *Ephraim*.

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“ again to my Father’s House in Peace; then shall the
 “ Lord be my God: And this Stone which I have
 “ set up for a Pillar shall be God’s ^w House: And of all
 “ that thou shalt give me I will surely give the ^x Tenth
 “ unto thee.”

Having thus perform’d his Devotions he proceeded
 chearfully on his Journey, till he came to *Haran*; and
 being near the Town he met with Flocks and Shepherds
 near a Stone Well. He ask’d them, whether they knew
Laban the Son of *Nabor*; they told him they did, that
 he was in good Health, and that his Daughter *Rachel*
 would soon be there with her Flock. She came there in
 a short Time after this Discourse, and *Jacob* very oblig-
 ingly rolled away the Stone from the Well’s Mouth and
 water’d her Sheep for her: Which done, he told her
 who he was, and saluting her with a Kiss, he wept for
 Joy. *Rachel* leaving *Jacob* at the Well, made haste to
 tell her Father whom she had met; who hearing of the
 Arrival of his Sister’s Son, in joyful haste ran out to meet
 him; and having imbraced and kiss’d him, he brought
 him home with him. To whom *Jacob* gave an Account
 of the Occasion of his coming from home, and of the
 Vision he had seen by the Way. By which *Laban* found
 that his Nephew had not misbehaved himself at home,
 or left his Parents without their Consent and Direction,
 tho’ he came so bare and unattended. Besides, it was
 necessary for *Jacob* to let *Laban* see, that he was under
 the immediate Protection and Care of Providence. *La-*
ban having heard these Things, acknowledges him to be
 his near Kinsman, and gave him a kind Reception; and
Jacob, to let his Uncle see he was not used to an idle
 useless Course of Life, enters himself in the Business of
 the Family, as intending to make some stay there.

^w House. That is, in the Place where I
 have set up this Pillar will I worship God.

^x Tenth. This is the Second mention
 of Tythes or Tenths, and the first Vow con-
 cerning them, made voluntarily and ex-
 press’d in the Terms of giving them to
 God. How, or when it was perform’d

is not express’d, unless it were by an Of-
 fering unto God, when *Jacob* built an Al-
 tar at *Elberthel*, and set up a Pillar in the
 Place where God had talked with him,
 and poured a Drink-Offering, and Oil
 thereon, at his return from *Padan-aram*,
Gen. xxxv. 7, 14.

Which

Which when *Laban* saw, he took an Opportunity to discourse his Nephew, and let him know, that he did not expect, nor think it reasonable he should serve him for nothing; therefore he desired him to name what Wages he would have. The lovely Shepherdess at the first Interview had fir'd *Jacob's* Heart, and her he names as a Reward of Seven Years Service. *Laban* readily consented, and *Jacob* immediately enters upon his Seven Years, which his Fondness for *Rachel* made short.

The Time being expired, *Jacob* demanded his Wife. Upon which *Laban* solemnized the Nuptials publickly, inviting his Friends and Neighbours: But being desirous of detaining *Jacob* in his Service for a longer Time, he put a very unfair Trick upon him; for in the Evening he took *Leah*, and brought her to *Jacob's* Bed instead of *Rachel*. *Jacob* the next Morning finding the Cheat, complain'd to his Father-in-Law; who put it off with a very slender Excuse, alledging that it was not the Custom of that Country to give the Younger in Marriage before the Elder. This was but a poor Excuse indeed; but *Laban*, who had all along observ'd *Jacob's* Fondness for *Rachel*, knew he could bring him to any Terms, tho' never so unreasonable; which made him demand another Seven Years Service for his younger Daughter, tho' at the same Time he was afraid *Jacob* in Resentment of the Injury done him should throw off *Leah*, and not receive her for his Wife; wherefore he intreats him to fulfil her ² Week;

“ And

¹ Bed. It was the Custom of the Country that the Bride on Pretence of Modesty should be cover'd with a Veil when she was brought to the Bridegroom: By which means *Jacob* was imposed upon by *Laban*, and could not discern that it was *Leah* till the next Morning.

² Week. Or Seven Days, which Time according to the Custom of those Countries was dedicated to the nuptial Solemnities. And by this fulfilling *Leah's* Week was intended, that *Jacob* should openly acknowledge her for his Wife, which *Laban* seem'd to doubt: And at the End of

the Week should marry and enjoy *Rachel*. Though by the Word *Week* here, some understand a Week of Years, or Seven Years: And to fulfil her Week, he was to serve the other Seven Years for *Rachel* afterwards. Some old English Versions render it so; but the LXX is otherwise, for it is positively there a Week, at the End of which he was to have *Rachel*, and serve Seven Years for her afterwards. And this appears to be the right Sense of the Place by the Order of the Story: For tho' *Jacob* lived with *Laban* Twenty Years, (*Gen.* xxxi. 28. and 41.) yet it is plain at the End

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“ And then, *said he*, ^a I will give thee this also, for the Service which thou shalt serve with me Seven other Years.” *Jacob* consenting to *Laban*’s Proposal, fulfill’d *Leah*’s Week, and then married and bedded *Rachel*; of whom he was so fond, that he ^b slighted *Leah*. But God pitying her, made her fruitful, and restrained *Rachel* from bearing: So that *Leah* had four Sons, viz. *Reuben*, *Simeon*, *Levi* and *Judah*, before *Rachel* had one. This was a great Trouble to *Rachel*, which in a short Time broke off all Family Conversation between them, and at last improv’d to real Enmity. *Rachel* being blinded with her too earnest Desire of Children, imputes her Barrenness to her Husband, and vents her Discontent in a very unadvised and passionate Expression, saying, “ Give me Children or I die.” *Jacob* was always very fond of her, but like a prudent Man his Judgment got the Ascendant of his Affection; and tho’ he was naturally of a mild Temper, yet these rash inconsiderate Words of *Rachel* incens’d him to that Degree, that he could not forbear giving her this smart, tho’ short Reproof: “ Am I in God’s Stead, *said he*, who hath made thee barren?”

Rachel thus rebuk’d and brought to a Sense of her Folly, began to think with herself of another Way to supply this Defect of Nature, as she thought, by having recourse to her Grand-mother *Sarah*’s Stratagem; and therefore she, having before discoursed the Matter with her Husband, gives him her Maid *Bilhah* for an Under-Wife or Concubine, reckoning with her self, that what Children *Jacob* should have by her Maid, should be hers; for she would cherish them as if they had

End of the Fourteenth Year *Jacob* propos’d to part, and return home. But *Rachel* had born *Joseph* before that; (*Gen.* xxx. 25.) and besides, she had been a barren Wife a good while before she bore *Joseph*; and had two Sons by her Maid *Bilhah*, before she conceived *Joseph*; all which could not have been, if she had not been married before the End of his second Seven Years.

^a I will give, &c. Some will have this, *we will give*; that is, I, and my Wife and Friends: But the LXX say, *I will give*.

^b Slighted. Our Version renders this *hated*; but it should have been consider’d, that the Word which is render’d to *hate*, does also signify *to love less*, or *take less Care* of a Thing, and not to wish or do it any Harm.

been

been her own. Accordingly, when *Bilhah* bore *Jacob* a Son *Rachel* claims him, takes him for her own, and names him *Dan*; she likewise did the same by the second, and called his Name *Naphtali*. *Leah* imitates her Sister's Policy, because she thought her self to have done Childing; and gave her Husband her Maid *Zilpah* to Wife, who had two Sons, which she called *Gad* and *Asher*.

By this Time *Reuben* was grown up big enough to be trusted by himself in the Fields; where, as he was one Day wandering he found some pretty Flowers, which he brought home to his Mother. *Rachel* seeing them, had a great Desire to have them, and pray'd her Sister

^c *Flowers*. What these Flowers were is undeterminable, they are render'd *Mandrakes*, which is an Herb, whose Root is said to have the Likeness of a Man. But some Criticks give Reasons to shew that these could not be the same. However, it is certain, that whatever they were, the Versions could not have chosen a more improper Word than that of *Mandrakes*, to express the Hebrew Word *Dudaim*, *Gen. xxx. 14, 15*. For the *Mandrakes* have nothing in them which should render them so passionately desirable, either as to Smell, Taste, or Vertue: Whether we suppose that *Rachel* desir'd them to satisfy her Hunger, according to *Josephus*; or whether we suppose with some *Rabbies*, that she was to make a Philtre or Love-Drink of them; or to help her to have Children; or, with others, that she desir'd them only for the Smell: For it is an ill scented, stinking Fruit, of a cold Quality, stupifying and poisonous; and all that is alledg'd to the contrary, evidently false and fabulous as *Antoninus Deyfingius* has proved. But it is not in the least probable, that *Rachel* was under a Necessity of desiring a Fruit which the Shepherds could scarcely eat in the Fields, when they could find nothing else; not that she stood in need of any Thing to make her belov'd of her Husband, who gave her Marks of the most tender Affection. Besides that *Leah*, who was in Comparison despis'd by *Jacob*, would not have parted with it to *Rachel*, had it not been proper to beget Love,

Nay, the Time, in which *Reuben* found this *Dudaim*, does not suffer us to believe that she desir'd to eat them, nor that they were *Mandrakes*: For it is observ'd, that it was in the Days of Wheat-Harvest, that is at the End of *April* or Beginning of *May*, which was the Time of their Harvest in *Palestine*, and in which the *Mandrakes* only did begin to bud, not producing their Fruit till *Autumn*. This has oblig'd *Junius*, *Tremellius*, &c. to render this Word by those of fine and lovely Flowers, and some *Rabbies* by that of *Violets* and *Jesamins*; which agrees pretty well with the Time of which *Moses* speaks, and to the Expression of the Spouse in the *Canticles*. Others think that this Word denotes the Lily; which in *Syria* is of a most agreeable Beauty and Smell, and this seems to be with some the true Signification of it: But then *Rachel* need not to have been so desirous of having them from *Reuben*, if they had been so common as to grow in the Fields. In fine, it is most probable they were Flowers, but what Sort is hard to guess at, tho' it may reasonably be supposed very scarce, otherwise considering the Difference between *Leah* and *Rachel*, the latter would have gone or sent for them, rather than have been beholden to the Son of her Rival. That which renders this Difficulty more unsolvable, is the rare Mention of the Word *Dudaim*, it being no where made use of in the Holy Scriptures, but here and in *Canticles vii. 13*.

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to give her some of them. *Leah* thinking *Rachel* had too great a Share in her Husband's Affection, and forgetting that her Sister, not her self, was *Jacob's* Choice, answers her somewhat churlishly, "Is it not enough, said she, that you have taken my Husband from me, but you must take away my Son's Flowers too?" *Rachel* might have retorted sharply, but having a Mind to the Flowers she would not contend, but propos'd an Agreement. *Jacob* in course was that Night to have been *Rachel's* Bedfellow; therefore she tells her Sister, that, if she will give her some of the Flowers, she shall enjoy her Husband's Company that Night. *Leah* likes the Proposal, and they agree upon it; and *Leah* to make sure of him, went out in the Evening to meet *Jacob* at his Return from the Field; and having acquainted him with the Terms of their Agreement, invites him to her Apartment and had his Company that Night.

Leah, who but a little before thought she had done Childing, conceived again and brought forth her fifth Son, whom she named *Issachar*, because he was the Fruit of her Hire. After that conceiving again she had a sixth Son, whom she named *Zebulun*; and at last she bare *Jacob* the only Daughter we read he had, whose Name was *Dinah*.

Hitherto *Rachel* had no Issue of her own Body: But now it pleased God to remember her; and having by long Barrenness corrected her inordinate Desire of Children, he at length hearken'd to her Request, and blessed her with a Son: Upon which rejoicing that God had taken away her^d Reproach, and, predicting that the Lord would give her another Son, she called the Name of this Boy *Joseph*. Soon after whose Birth *Jacob* having served his last seven Years, began to entertain Thoughts of returning to his own Coun-

^d Reproach. So Barrenness was then multiply, Barrenness was accounted a accounted; and because Fruitfulness came Curse, of God's Blessing, who said, Increase and

try; therefore putting *Laban* in mind, that the Time for which he had contracted to serve him was now expired, he desired him to deliver him his Wives and Children and send him away. This was very disagreeable Discourse to *Laban*; who acknowledging the great Advantages he had received from *Jacob's* Service, and that he was sensible the Lord had blessed him for his sake, he earnestly importun'd him to tarry still with him, offering him at the same Time what Wages he would ask. *Jacob* was as sensible of the Benefits of his Service as *Laban*, and valued himself upon them, telling him how, by the Blessing of God upon his careful Management, his little Flock was increas'd to a Multitude, wishing him to consider how his own Family was increas'd, having now many Children, for whom it was Time to make some Provision, and therefore insisted upon his Return to his own Country. *Laban* could not hear of parting, and therefore presses him to stay, offering him his own Terms. *Jacob* overcome by *Laban's* Importunity, told him he should give him nothing; but, if he approved of the Terms he should offer, he would continue in his Service. The Terms were these: They should pass thro' the whole Flock both of Sheep and Goats, and separating the speckled Cattle from the white, *Laban's* Sons should take Care of the spotted Flock, and *Jacob* of the white: and then whatsoever spotted or brown Cattle should be produc'd out of the white Flock, which he was to keep, should be his Hire. *Laban* readily clos'd with these Conditions, and accordingly they parted the Flocks, delivering the spotted Cattle to *Laban's* Sons, and the rest to *Jacob* to keep: And *Laban*, that he might prevent any Intercourse between them, set them three Days Journey asunder.

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The

GENESIS CHAP. XXX.
Jacob sets rods before the flocks.

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GENESIS 30. Verse 38.

*And he set the rods which he had pil-
led before the flocks in the gutters in the
watering-troughs, when they came to drink*

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The Flocks being thus disposed, the ^c Divine Wisdom by inlightning *Jacob's* Understanding, put him in a Way to improve his own Stock, and at the same Time to lessen that of *Laban* for his Covetousness. *Jacob* takes Twigs of green Poplar, Hasel, and Chestnut-Trees, and peeling off the Rinds in strakes, made the White to appear in the Twigs; which he placing in the watering Troughs, when the Cattle came to drink in Ramming-time, they seeing the speckled Twigs conceived and brought forth speckled Cattle. Besides, he took special Care to lay the Twigs before the lustiest and strongest Cattle; but before the weak and feeble he did not lay any: By which Artifice he procured to himself not only the greater Number, but the ablest and strongest. *Laban* envying *Jacob's* Prosperity, repented of his Bargain, and several Times altered the Agreement, which God still turned to *Jacob's* Advantage. And now *Jacob* having been twenty Years in *Laban's* Service, he happened to over-hear his Brothers-in-Law *Laban's* Sons grumbling and complaining, that he had raised himself a fair Estate out of their Fortunes; and having observ'd for some Time *Laban's* Coolness and Indifference, he began to think of leaving him, and return to his Father's House, which God in a Vision oblig'd him to do; but before he put this in Execution he thought it adviseable to consult his Wives, and to draw them to consent to go along with him; and sending for them both into the Field, that he might with the more Freedom and Privacy discourse with them, he communicated his whole Design to them; telling them he had observ'd, that their Father's Car-

^c *Divine Wisdom.* Here is a Reward of *Jacob's* Dependence on Providence for his Wages, for he had found so much Fraud in his Father-in-Law's Dealing, that he had little Reason to trust to his Honesty. And in the same Instance God remember'd *Laban's* unrighteous Dealing with *Jacob*, how he deceived him in his first Marriage, giving him his deform'd Daughter *Leah* instead of the

beautiful *Rachel*; and how out of a covetous Desire to serve himself upon him, he had contriv'd Ways to detain him in his Service: Now therefore God takes from *Laban* the Riches he had before given him for *Jacob's* sake, and bestows them upon *Jacob*: And that in such a Manner, as *Laban* could neither help himself, nor justly find fault with *Jacob*.

riage of late towards him was very much chang'd; tho' he knew not for what Cause; for he appeal'd to them concerning his Fidelity and Diligence, and their Father's unfair Dealing towards him, in deceiving him, and changing his Wages so often: But God had turned all their Father's Contrivances against him to his Advantage, and had taken away their Father's Cattle and given them to him. Then he told them the Lord had lately appeared to him, and put him in Mind of the Vow he had made at *Bethel*, in his Passage from *Canaan* thither (of which he had formerly given them an Account at his first (coming,) and that the Lord had now commanded him to return to the Land of his Kindred. His Wives having heard him very attentively, declar'd themselves of his Opinion concerning their Father, and consented to go with him, desiring him to set out when he pleas'd and they would attend him. *Jacob* therefore preparing all Things for his Journey, mounting his Wives and Children upon Camels, set forward with all his Cattle and Goods which he had gotten in *Haran*, taking the Advantage of his Father-in-Law's Absence, who was at that Time gone to shear his Sheep; which likewise gave *Rachel* Opportunity to steal and carry away his ^f *Teraphim*. *Jacob* passes the River *Euphrates*, and

^f *Teraphim*. The Word *Teraph* signifieth in general the compleat Image of a Man, 1 Sam. xix. 13. More particularly it signifieth an Idol or Image made for Man's private Use in their own Houses; so that these Images seem to have been their Household Gods; *Wherefore hast thou stole my Gods?* My *Teraphim*, Gen. xxxi. 30. And the Man *Micah* had an *House of Gods*, and made an *Ephod* and *Teraphim*, Judg. xvii. 5. The manner how these Images were made, is fondly conceiv'd among the Rabbies; *They killed a Man that was a First-born Son, and wrung off his Head, and season'd it with Salt and Spices, and wrote upon a Plate of Gold the Name of an unclean Spirit, and put it under the Head upon a Wall, and lighted Candles before it, and*

worshipp'd. With such *Laban* spake, for they. But without Controversy the *Teraphim* which *Michal* put into the Bed, 1 Sam. xix. 13. was a compleat Statue or Image of a Man. The Use of these Images was to consult with them as with Oracles, concerning Things unknown for the present, or future. To this purpose they were made by Astrologers under certain Constellations, capable of heavenly Influences, whereby they were enabled to speak. *The Teraphim have spoken Vanity*, Zach. x. 2. And among other Reasons, why *Rachel* stole away her Father's Images, this is thought to be one, that *Laban* might not by consulting with these Images discover what Way *Jacob* took in his Flight.

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makes to Mount *Gilead*; and tho' he had the Advantage of three Days before *Laban* pursu'd him, yet in seven Days Time *Laban* came up with him.

At his first setting out after *Jacob*, no Doubt, *Laban* pursu'd him with a Mind whetted with Revenge; but God in a Dream by Night charged him not so much as to speak roughly to *Jacob*. Therefore the next Morning when he with his Kindred came to speak with *Jacob*, he in soft and quiet Words expostulated with him the Unhandsomeness of the Action in so sily stealing away from him, carrying his Daughters away like Captives, and not suffering him to take Leave of them or their Children, and to send them away with an Equipage becoming their Rank; telling him, it was very unadvisedly done of him to give such a Provocation, considering it was in his Power to have done him hurt; nay, he plainly hinted he would have done it, had not God appeared to him, and laid a Restraint upon him. But *Laban* did not only chide *Jacob* for his Unkindness, but charg'd him with Theft, saying, "Tho' thou hadst ever so great a Desire to return to thy Father's House, yet why didst thou steal my *Teraphim*?"

Jacob excus'd his clandestine Departure from *Laban*, by telling him, he was afraid that if he had acquainted him with his Purpose, he would forcibly have detain'd his Daughters; but as to the Theft (not knowing that *Rachel* had stolen the *Teraphim*) he warmly reply'd, "With whomsoever thou findest thy *Teraphim*, let him not live." And to vindicate his Innocency, he bids *Laban* search his Goods in the Presence of his Friends; and if he could find any Thing of his he might take it. Upon this *Laban* search'd the Tents of *Jacob*, *Leah*, and the two Handmaids; and not finding what he look'd for, went into *Rachel's* Tent. *Rachel* was hardly put to it, for she very well knew, that if the Idols should be found in her Custody, both her Father and her Husband would be

highly offended with her. She had but just Time, whilst *Laban* was searching the other Tents, to contrive how to conceal them, which she did by putting them into the Camel's Furniture, and having set herself down upon them, *Laban* enters the Tent; whereupon keeping her Seat, she begg'd his Pardon for not rising to salute him, alledging for Excuse, that the Custom of Women was upon her. *Laban* in point of Modesty desists from any farther Search, not suspecting the Trick his Daughter put upon him; upon which *Jacob* very sharply reproached him for his unjust Suspicion, appealing to *Laban's* Friends to judge between them. The recounting the long Servitude he had held him in, his Faithfulness, Care and Diligence in his Service; the Hardships he had undergone therein both by Day and Night, and the hard and unequal Terms he had held him to all along, he concluded thus, "Except the God of my Father
 " had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away
 " empty: But God hath seen my Affliction, and the
 " Labour of mine Hands, and rebuked thee yesterday
 " night.

This Charge of *Jacob's* was so just, that *Laban* could make no Defence for himself; and therefore he thought best to let fall the Debate; and changing his Resentment to a fit of Fondness, calls *Jacob*, his Wives, Children, and all that he had his, and pretending for that Reason, he would not hurt them, lest therein he should hurt himself, he proposed a Covenant of Peace between them, which they did by erecting a Pillar or Heap of Stones for a *Memorandum* of it, and they took an Oath of each other that neither of them should invade the other, and that *Jacob* should not misuse his Wives. After this *Jacob* gave them an Entertainment, and next Morning *Laban* having imbrac'd his Daughters and their Children returned home.

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This Rencounter had not a little ruffled *Jacob's* mild Disposition, and therefore God to comfort and confirm him in an Assurance of the Divine Protection was graciously pleas'd to send his ² Angels, who met him on the Way: Which *Jacob* espying, he said, This is God's Host.

No sooner is one storm over, but another threatens. *Jacob* being now near the Confines of *Edom* begins to recollect, that he was within the Reach of his incens'd Brother *Eſau*, whom he had highly provok'd, and in what a revengeful Humour he left him; and considering that in all this Time (which was Twenty Years) he had received no Account from his Mother of the Abatement of his Brother's Resentment, which she had ^h promis'd to do when she found it, he thought it adviseable to send a pacifying Message to him, to know what Temper he was in before he came near him. *Jacob* therefore instructing the Messengers, order'd them to address themselves to him in these Words: "Thy Servant *Jacob* saith thus; I have sojourn'd with *Laban*, and stay'd there till now; where I have exceedingly enrich'd my self, and now I have sent to acquaint my ⁱ Lord with

² Angels. Interpreters conclude these to be two Hosts or Armies of Angels; whereof one was that of the Guardian Angel of *Mesopotamia*, who with his Company conducted *Jacob* safely to the Confines of *Canaan*; where the Guardian Angel of *Canaan* with his Company received him into their Care. And this is inferr'd from the Necessity of *Jacob's* being expos'd to the dangerous Treachery of *Laban*, and the Cruelty of *Eſau*, which made Providence more particularly careful of *Jacob*, to whom the Promises were made. But considering the Etymology of the Word *Mahanaim*, (which signifies Two Armies or Camps) there is probable Ground for this Conjecture of the Interpreters and others.

^h Promis'd. See *Gen.* xxvii. 45.

ⁱ Lord. Since *Isaac* by divine Direction had made *Jacob* Lord over *Eſau*, it may be ask'd, how *Jacob* should call *Eſau* his Lord, and himself his Servant? To which it may be answer'd, that by this submission *Jacob* did not reject the Ho-

nour and Dominion conferred by God upon him: but patiently waiting for the Execution of God's Will, he kept himself within the Bounds of Nature, and revered *Eſau* as his elder Brother. Besides, it may be question'd whether *Jacob* meant any more by these Words, [Lord and Servant,] than what was customarily used among all Sorts then, especially by those, who had a Mind to ingratiate themselves with others. That the first use of the Word *Lord* between Man and Man was a mere honorary Compliment, and practis'd first among the idolatrous and Heathen Nations, appears from the Children of *Heth*, (who were Heathens) calling *Abram* Lord and Prince; and from them came to be taken up and used by the Fathers and People of God afterwards, as many Things besides were contracted by conversing with them. However, it is plain here, that *Jacob* thro' Fear of *Eſau* used the Words, thinking that he might thereby please and soften the rugged Humour of his haughty Brother.

“this, that I may find Favour in thy Sight.” The Messengers set out, and soon return, giving *Jacob* such an Account, as put him into a terrible Fright; for they brought no Answer from *Esau*, but only told *Jacob* that his Brother *Esau* was coming to meet him at the Head of Four hundred Men. *Jacob* immediately concludes from the Number of the Men, that his Brother came against him with an hostile Intent, which threw him into a great Distraction of Thought: He was too weak to fight him; and his Retinue too heavy and cumbersome to fly with; at last he comes to this Resolution, viz. to divide his Company and Cattle into Two Bands; which being set at a convenient Distance, he hoped that if *Esau* should fall upon one of them, the other might have Opportunity to escape.

This was *Jacob*'s human Contrivance, but his Safety lay in a divine Protection; which he had lately in the like Distress experienced, when his Uncle *Laban* pursu'd him. Therefore, as then, so he now addresses himself to God in this earnest Supplication. “O
“God of my Father *Abraham* and *Isaac*, which
“saidst to me, Return to thy Country, and I will
“do well by thee: I am not worthy of the least of
“thy Mercies; but thou hast increas'd my Stock;
“for when I pass'd over this River first, I had no-
“thing but my Staff, and now I am become a Mul-
“titude: Deliver me, I pray thee, from the Hand of
“my Brother, for I fear his Malice, lest he smite me
“and mine. Remember how thou saidst, I will
“surely do thee Good, and make thy Posterity as the
“Sand of the Sea, which cannot be number'd for
“Multitude.” Having thus implored the Divine Protection, he bethinks himself of another Expedient to soften his Brother's Resentment. He might perhaps think that his Brother look'd upon his first Message as a dull dry Compliment, an empty Piece of Formality; and therefore, since he had by his Messengers acquainted

GENESIS CHAP. XXXII. ¹⁶

Jacob wrestling with the Angel.



GENESIS 32. Verse 24.

*And Jacob was left alone: and there
wrestled a man with him until y^e break-
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acquainted his Brother that he was grown so rich, he resolves to send him a very handsome Present; but fearing he should be upon him before the Present could be delivered, he was forc'd to take it of that which came first to Hand; which was thus: Two hundred She-Goats, and Twenty He-Goats; Two hundred Ews, and Twenty Rams; Thirty Milch-Camels with their Colts; Forty Kine, and Ten Bulls; and Twenty She-Asses, with Ten Ass-Foles; all in separate Drovers, ordering the Servants to keep them at a reasonable Distance, charging the Servant that followed the first Drove to deliver the Present to his Brother; the same he deliver'd to the rest; hoping that the Sight of so many and different Presents, delivered in a submissive and obliging Manner, might work upon his Brother's harsh Temper.

The same Night he with his Wives and Children pass'd the Brook *Jabbock*, himself being the last; and being left alone, there appeared a Man, who ^kwrestled with him till it was Day, and permitted *Jacob* to prevail; but that he might be sensible he did not prevail by his own Strength, he gave him a Touch in the Hollow of his Thigh, and put the Joint out.

Then said the Man, *Let me go, for Day breaketh.* But *Jacob* said, I will not let thee go till thou hast blessed me. The Man then asking him his Name, and he saying it was *Jacob*: Thy Name, reply'd the other, shall not only be called *Jacob*, but likewise ¹*Israel*: For as a Prince hast thou Power with God,

^kWrestled. The Person that is here said to have wrestled with *Jacob* was an Angel, and the Reason of his permitting *Jacob* to prevail, was to give him Hope, that in like Manner he should mitigate and conquer his Brother *Esau*. This was the Opinion of both Greek and Latin Fathers.

If any should inquire how *Jacob's* Thigh being put out of Joint should so soon be reduc'd, and he consequently able to travel; it may justly be reply'd, That the same Power, which miraculously appear'd to him, wrestled with him, and

put his Thigh out of Joint, could as easily reduce the Dislocation; for it was all but one Miracle.

¹*Israel*. It's certain Translations do often contradict themselves, of which we have a remarkable Instance in *Gen. xxxii. 28.* where 'tis translated, *Thy Name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel.* Tho' it's certain this Patriarch was afterwards often called by the Name of *JACOB*: No more therefore ought to be translated; not only, which it very properly implies here in this Place, and that would take away the seeming Contradiction.

and with Men, and hast prevailed. *Jacob* demanded his Name; which he was shy of telling him; he therefore blessed him, and departed. *Jacob*, as the Sun arose, passing from the Place where he had this wrestling Exercise, called it *Peniel*, which signifies the Face of God, because, said he, I have seen God Face to Face and my Life is preserved.

After this *Jacob* proceeded on his Journey, and had not gone far before he espied his Brother *Esau* coming, attended by Four hundred Men; upon which he began to dispose his Company into the most commodious Order, either for the Reception of his Brother, or Safety of those he most regarded. Putting therefore the two Handmaids *Bilhah* and *Zilpah* with their Children foremost, and *Leah* with her Children next; he set his beloved *Rachel* and her Son *Joseph* in the Rear, and himself passed before. When he was come near he bowed himself Seven Times to the Ground, but *Esau* not able to resist the powerful Impression which *Jacob's* meek Submission made upon his Spirit, with eager Joy runs to meet him, falls upon his Neck and kisses him: Revenge and murderous Designs are turn'd into Pity and Tenderneſs; and *Esau*, who once thirsted after his Brother's Blood, now melts into Tears of Joy at this happy Interview, and nothing but Instances of Brotherly Love and Friendship pals between them.

Esau thus transported with Joy at the Sight of *Jacob*, with Pleasure surveys his Store, and is with great Difficulty persuaded to accept of a Present. He salutes his Wives and Children, and to shew further Marks of his Reconciliation and Fondneſs offer'd to bear him Company the remaining Part of his Journey. But *Jacob*, still retaining his former Jealousy, excus'd himself, by telling him, that the Children and Cattle could not keep Pace with him, without much Fatigue, and therefore desired him to go before, and himself would follow leisurely as the Children and Flocks

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Flocks could bear, and that he would wait on him in his own ^m Country of *Seir*. Then *Esau* very courteously offered to leave some of his Men to guard and attend him; but *Jacob* handsomely excus'd it as an unnecessary Compliment. Upon which they parted very friendly, * *Esau* taking his Way towards *Seir*, and *Jacob* by easy Journeys travell'd to *Succoth*; where intending to settle for some Time, he built an House and Conveniencies to shelter his Cattle.

Afterwards he removed to *Salom* a City of *Shechem*; where having bought a Piece of Ground of the Children of ⁿ *Hamor* for a Hundred ^o Pieces of Money, he spread his Tent, and erected an Altar there, and called upon the Name of the Mighty God of *Israel*.

During *Jacob's* Stay in this Place, his only Daughter *Dinah* took a Walk abroad by her self, out of Curiosity to see the Women of that Country. It happened that young *Shechem*, the Son of *Hamor*, Prince of that Place, saw her, and falling desperately in Love with her, could not restrain his Passion; but taking Advantage of the dangerous and unlucky Opportunity of her being alone, ravish'd her. Notwithstanding this dishonourable Act, his Soul is so strongly possess'd with her Charms, that he cannot live without her; and therefore he importunes his Father

^m Country. It may reasonably be suppos'd that *Jacob* never intended to meet *Esau* in *Seir*; because it doth not appear, that he ever did go thither. Besides, it's possible he might apprehend himself not safe in his Brother's Dominions, who might there take Occasion to renew his former Grudge, and in Revenge destroy or enslave both him and his Family.

* *Esau*. *Moses* gives no further Account of *Esau* and his Family, only that he had three Wives, *Aholibama*, and *Ada*, *Canaanites*; and *Basemath* the Daughter of *Ismael*. That the first had three Children, *Jehus*, *Ishon* and *Core*; the Second

had *Eliphaz*, and the Third *Rahuel*, and that he left the Land of *Canaan* to go live on the Mountains of *Seir*. *Moses* names the Descendants of *Eliphaz* and *Rahuel*, and the Princes of the Tribes of the *Edomites*, the Kings that succeeded them, and the Chiefs, who govern'd after the Kings. See *Gen.* xxxvi. and xxxv. 29.

ⁿ *Hamor*. *St. Stephen* in *Acts* vii. 16. calls this Man *Emmor*.

^o Pieces of Money. This is sometimes rendred an hundred Lambæ, because the Image of a Lamb was stamped upon it.

to enter upon a Treaty with their Friends, that he might have her for his Wife. *Jacob* soon heard of this Rape committed upon his Daughter; which he conceal'd till his Sons were come home; which when they heard, they were incens'd at the Dishonour done their Family, and secretly vow'd Revenge.

Hamor's Fondness of his Son *Shechem* makes him soon yield to his Importunity: Taking the Opportunity therefore when *Jacob* and his Sons were together, he acquaints them with his Son's Passion for *Dinab*; intreating them to give her to him; and inviting them to intermarry with his People, offer'd them the Freedom of the Country, to dwell, trade, and make a Settlement there. And to back these, *Shechem* (who was present at the Treaty) in general offers them what Advantages they please to ask, bidding them name their Terms, and they should have them, provided they would but give him their Sister. *Jacob's* Sons neglect no Opportunity of revenging the Affront done their Family by this Rape: Therefore cunningly observing the Fondness of *Shechem* and his Father to close with them, they insist upon the more high and unreasonable Terms; no less than a general Circumcision will oblige them to accept of an Agreement to settle among and incorporate with them.

Hamor and *Shechem* readily agree to these Conditions; and when they return'd to the Town, summoning their Subjects together, commend the *Israelites* for a peaceable good-natured People; and that if they intermarried with them, they should be Masters of all their Substance, which was very considerable; and all this to be obtain'd upon their Consent to be circumcised. The Thirst of Gain soon prevailed upon this silly People, and being back'd with *Shechem's* Interest among them, which was very great, they all consented, and were every Male of them circumcised.

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GENESIS CHAP. XXXIV. ¹⁷
 The Shechemites are slain by the sons of Jacob.



GENESIS 34. Verse 26.
*And they slew Hamor and Shechem
 his son with the edge of the sword & took
 Dinah out of Shechems house & went out*

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Jacob's Sons having thus disguised their Resentment, in deluding the unwary *Shechemites*, the ^P third Day after they were circumcised, when their Wounds were forest, put their bloody Purpose in Execution. [¶] *Simeon* and *Levi* put themselves at the Head of the Party that was to attack the City, which they boldly enter'd, and put all the Men to the Sword; and searching *Shechem's* House, they found their Sister *Dinah*. After this they fell to plunder, and carried off not only what they found in the City, but all that was in the Field, making the Women and Children Prisoners; and what they could not carry off they spoiled. Thus the Sons of *Jacob* glutted their Revenge upon the *Shechemites* for the Rape of their Sister.

Peaceful *Jacob* knew nothing of this bloody Massacre, till it was over; and when his Sons brought the Trophies of their Cruelty to him, he took no Joy in their Conquest; and was so far from approving this rash Action in them, that he reproaches them for their Barbarity, and dreads the Consequence, which might end in the Ruin of him and his Family. But his two boisterous Sons *Simeon* and *Levi*, who had been the Ringleaders in this Mischief, took upon them to answer their Father for what they had done, saying, *Shechem* ought not to have used their Sister like a Harlot,

[¶] *Third Day.* This was the Time, as Physicians observe, when Fevers generally attend Circumcision, occasioned by the Inflammation of the Wound, and which was more painful then, as the *Hebrews* observ'd, than at any time else; for which Reason the Sons of *Jacob* took that Opportunity of falling on the *Shechemites*, who were then less able to defend themselves.

[¶] *Simeon.* In this Action there are none named but *Simeon* and *Levi*, whom we may suppose to be the chief Contrivers and Managers of this bloody Massacre, as being own Brothers to *Dinah* both by Father and Mother, and elder than the rest, except *Reuben*, who was of a more gentle and humane Disposition; (as we find in *Gen. xxxvii.*

22. when he saved poor *Joseph's* Life, contrary to the Will of his other cruel Brothers;) yet it is reasonable to think, that the rest of the Sons of *Jacob*, who were old enough for such an Exploit, and their Servants also, were engag'd in this Execution; tho' these two only, as Authors of the Design, are named. And indeed it is scarcely conceivable, that two Men should be able to master a City, and slay all the Men in it, (tho' they were hurt in so tender a Part of the Body as disabled them from Action and Defence) and should also take all the Women Prisoners, who of themselves may be supposed to have been more than sufficient to over-power two Men.

by which he had dishonoured not only her, but their whole Family.

It is plain that *Jacob's* Fear was not groundless, by the Care God took to remove him from the Danger that must necessarily have attended this cruel and inhospitable Fact of his inconsiderate Sons. For tho' they had extirpated one Colony, there were more People that border'd thereabout, who, either in Defence of themselves, or in Revenge for such unjustifiable Dealings, might give *Jacob* great Uneasiness, if not totally destroy him. God therefore to secure him, bid him arise and go up to *Bethel*, and dwell there; and erect an Altar there to God who had appear'd to him to comfort and strengthen him, when he fled from the Face of his Brother *Esau*, whom he then as much dreaded, as he did these People now.

In Obedience to the Divine Call, *Jacob* strictly charges his Family, and all that belong'd to him, to put away the strange Gods which they had, and be^c clean, and change their Garments; and then, said he, let us arise and go up to *Bethel*, the House of God. By these Means *Jacob* got from them their Idols, and their Ear-rings too. And that these Ear-rings might not be a Snare to him and his Family, as the like were afterwards to *Gideon*, *Jacob* resolv'd to make sure of them, as well as of the Idols; and therefore he buried them so privately, that none of his Family should know where they

^a *Gods*. Perhaps by this time *Jacob* might have discovered that *Rachel* had gotten and kept her Father *Laban's* Idols, for which he pursued *Jacob*; or perhaps they might be some Idols which his Sons had got among the Spoils of the *Shechemites*: or it may be, that neither his Wives nor Sons were guilty of, or inclinable to Idolatry, but only his Servants or Slaves might be Idolaters.

^c *Clean, &c.* This may probably be meant of abstaining from conjugal Enjoyment, and sanctifying themselves, not only from idolatrous Pollution, but from the late Massacre at *Shechem*. See *Exod.* xix. 10, and 15. But that it was

a Custom for those that came to appear before the Lord to wash their Cloaths, appears plainly from *Exod.* xix. 10. *Levit.* xv. 13. and 2 *Sam.* xii. 20.

^e *Ear-rings*. These were worn by some People in a superstitious Devotion, as being thought to have some magical Virtue or Charm in them; and it is not unlikely, that some of *Jacob's* Servants, if they themselves were not *Ishmaelites*, might have taken up the Use of Ear-rings from the *Ishmaelites*, amongst whom it was afterwards a known Fashion. *Judges* viii. 24.

^u *Gideon*. See *Judges* viii. 27.

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were to take them up again; for he hid them under the Oak by *Shechem*; and then set forward for *Bethel*. Whither he passed in great Quiet and Security; for God had struck such a Terror into the Cities round about him, that notwithstanding the Provocation his Sons had given by the Outrage they had committed at *Shechem*, no body offer'd to molest or pursue them.

Being safely arrived at *Bethel*, he erected an Altar there as God had commanded him: And upon that Altar, and at that time, it is supposed he performed the Vow which he had made when God appeared to him in the same Place, as he fled from his ^w Brother *Esau*. Which when he had performed God appeared to him again, confirmed his new Name *Israel* to him, and gave him repeated Assurances of his Promises made to *Abraham* and *Isaac*, with new Blessings to himself. Then did *Jacob*, in the Place where God had now talked with him, erect a Pillar of Stone, as a lasting Monument of his Gratitude and Devotion, pouring a Drink-offering and Oil upon it. In this Place, and about this time, ^x *Deborah*, *Jacob's* Mother's Nurse, died, and was buried under an Oak, which was therefore called the *Oak of Weeping*.

Jacob having safely arrived at *Bethel*, makes no long stay there; but filial Affection prompting him, he hasten'd to *Mamre* to pay a Visit to his aged Father; and ^y *Ephrath* being in the Way, they intended to have got thither: But tho' they had but a little Way to it, they could not reach the Town before *Rachel* fell in Labour of her second and last Child; and having a hard Time of it, the Midwife, to encourage her, bid her not fear, for

^w Brother. See *Gen.* xxviii. 20, 21.

^x *Deborah*. Who this *Deborah* was, and for what reason she is mentioned here is not clear, and hath given Occasion of various Conjectures among Commentators. Some are of Opinion, that after she had brought her Mistress *Rebecca* to her Marriage, and seen her well settled in her Family, she went back to *Haran* again, and there dwelt in

Laban's House, till *Jacob* returning home, she having a Desire once more to see her old Mistress, put her self into the Company. Without Doubt she was very much respected by them, because they bewailed her Death so much, that the Oak, under which she was buried, was called the *Oak of Weeping*.

^y *Ephrath*. This Place was afterwards called *Bethlehem*.

she should have this Son also. Of whom indeed she was delivered, but died immediately; and just before she died, she called the Boy's Name *Benoni*, that is the Son of Sorrow: But his Father, unwilling to perpetuate the sad Remembrance of so sorrowful a Subject, called him *Benjamin*, which signifies the Son of my right Hand: Intimating hereby how dear he should be to him.

Jacob thus deprived of his beloved *Rachel*, raises a Monument over her Grave to perpetuate her Memory. This was no Doubt an Occasion of great Grief to *Jacob*, whose Fondness may be measured by the double Servitude he underwent to obtain her: But before he could reach to *Mamre* a greater Misfortune befel him; for *Reuben* his eldest Son committed Incest with *Bilhah*, his Father's Concubinary Wife. *Jacob* soon heard of it; and tho' he took no publick Notice at that time of it; yet it sate deep in his Mind, and stuck by him to his dying Day.

These two Afflictions sate heavy upon him for a time; but continuing his Resolution of visiting his Father, the Expectation of seeing that good old Man kindles a new Joy in his Heart. At length he reached *Mamre*, the City of *Arbath*, where his Grandfather *Abraham* had formerly liv'd, and his Father *Isaac* then dwelt; who (no

² Monument. Borchard says this was a very curiously wrought Pyramid, on the Basis of which were dispos'd twelve very large Stones, hinting the Number of his Sons: In this we see the Antiquity of erecting Monuments and Epitaphs in Memory of the Dead near the Place of their Burial; of which this of *Rachel* is the first that we read of in holy Scripture. Thus *Simon Machabec* erected a magnificent Monument over the Grave of his Father and Brothers. And *St. Jerome*, in his Epistle to *Marcella*, says, that he himself had performed his Devotions at *David's* Sepulchre, of which *St. Peter*, *Acts* ii. 29. says, And his Sepulchre is now among us.

³ Dying Day. *Jacob*, just before his Death, giving his Blessing among his Children, gave *Reuben* a reproachful Hint of his incestuous Crime; *Reuben*,

says he, thou art my First-born, and the Beginning of my Strength, the Excellency of Dignity, and the Excellency of Power. This was to have been his Portion, by Vertue of his Birthright, had he not by Transgression forfeited it. But now, being as unstable as Water, (which tho' advanced never so high, falls down again) his Doom was, Thou shalt not excel, because thou went'st up to thy Father's Bed, and defiled it, *Gen.* xlix. 3, 4. So *Reuben's* Birth-right was transferred to *Judah*, of whom our Lord was to come, (*ver.* 8.) from whom also in time it fell to the Son of *Rachel*, who in Right should have been *Jacob's* first wife, and whom *Jacob* thought he had imbraced when he begat *Reuben*.

⁴ Arbath. This was afterwards called *Hebron*,

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doubt) was overjoy'd at the Return of his Son *Jacob*, after so long an Absence: Nor could pious *Jacob's* Joy be less, to find his aged Father living, and in Health.

Jacob had not long enjoy'd the Blessing of his good Father's Company, but another Misfortune happen'd to exercise his Patience: [So variously is the Life of frail Man checkquered with the alternate Course of Good and Evil.] His Son *Joseph*, being about seventeen Years old, was with his Brethren feeding the Flock; and *Joseph* observing their wicked Conversation, told ^c Tales of them to his Father. This set their Hearts very much against him, for they could not but look upon him as a Spy upon them, and therefore resolve to remove him: And that which advanced their impious Rage, was the Marks of extraordinary Love his Father shew'd him more than to all his other Children; which he did perhaps, not only as he was the eldest Son of his beloved *Rachel*, but because he was ^d wise beyond his Years. This was indeed an engaging Quality; and the fond Father to express his greater Esteem for it than any Indowment in all his other Children, distinguishes *Joseph* from the rest of his Brethren by bestowing on him a fine Vest of several Colours, little thinking it would breed such ill Blood among them. This Note of Distinction so sower'd *Jacob's* other Sons, that they could not shew the least good

^a *Tales*. What Crime it was that occasioned *Joseph* to tell Tales of them to his Father, is the Subject of Variety of Conjecture among the Criticks and Versions. Some will have it to be their Quarrelling and contentious way of Living; others the Sin of *Sodomy*; others of Bestiality, &c. But whatever it was, it may be gathered from their Malice to him that it was no small Crime, because they hated him, even to Death.

^d *Wise*, &c. Or, that he was wise as a Senator. The Versions do not seem to have well express'd the Reason for which *Jacob* loved *Joseph* more than his Brethren, by these Words, *because he was the Son of his Old Age*, Gen. xxxvii,

3. For if his Love had been only founded on this Reason, he must have lov'd *Zebulun* as well as *Joseph*, since he was of the same Age; and he must have lov'd *Benjamin* more, since he was born sixteen Years after *Joseph*. The Hebrew Text says only, *because he was Son of the Elders or Senators*, that is, because he was their Disciple, in the Style of the Hebrews, and therefore the Samaritan, Persian and Arabick Versions, and the Chaldee Paraphrase render, *because he was a wise and prudent Son*: And it seems that they might be yet better translated, by saying, *That he was wise as a Senator*, Wisdom being a Quality which makes Parents fond of their Children, and prefer them to their Brethren.

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Temper to the Favourite, but studied all the Ways that Malice could invent to make him uneasy : And that which inhanc'd their Hatred to him was, *Joseph's* two Dreams, which he very innocently related to them, not suspecting so severe a Resentment from them as he afterwards found. The first was; " That his Brethren and " he binding Sheaves together in the Field, his Sheaf " arose and stood upright, and their Sheaves round " about fell down before his." His Brethren looking on him with Scorn reply'd, " Shalt thou reign over " us ?

His second Dream was a fresh Aggravation of their Spight, which the harmless Youth in his childish Simplicity likewise tells them: " I have seen, says he, " the Sun, and Moon, and eleven Stars fall down before me." Nor could he conceal this Dream from his Father, (so strong was the heavenly Impulse upon him) but told it him. Good old *Jacob*, whether to mitigate the Resentment of his other Sons towards *Joseph*, or that he thought these Dreams the Effect of an aspiring and conceited Forwardness in him, chid him, saying, " Shall I, and thy Mother and thy Brethren pay Homage to thee ?

These two Dreams of *Joseph* were very significant; and tho' his Father was willing thus to make light of them, that they might give less Occasion of Offence to his Brethren, yet they made an Impression on *Jacob's* Mind. And now whilst the envious Brothers were ruminating on Revenge, a fatal Opportunity offer'd it self, and the pious Parent becomes the Instrument of delivering his Darling into their implacably malicious Hands. The ten Brethren being gone to feed their Flocks at a Distance in *Shechem*, old *Israel*, out of his paternal Care desirous to know of their Welfare, sends his beloved *Joseph* to see and acquaint them with their Father's sollicitous Anxiety for their Health. *Joseph* in ready Obedience goes to *Shechem*, and not finding them there, wander'd about, till a Stranger directed him to

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Dothan; whither he went; and being come within Sight of them, their Malice, which hitherto lay latent for Want of Opportunity, reviv'd, and immediately came to a fatal Resolution to dispatch him. "See," cry'd the bloody Brothers, where the Dreamer comes! Let us kill him, and bury him, and tell our Father some wild Beast has devoured him; and then we shall see what will become of his Dreams." But *Reuben*, who was of a milder Disposition than the rest, would not approve of this bloody Contrivance, and studied to prevent it, dissuading them from shedding his Blood, and rather cast him into some Pit. The rest considering, that if he perished in the Pit, it would answer their End, consented to *Reuben's* Counsel. By this time the innocent Youth, not in the least apprehensive of their wicked Design on him, was come up to them, and as he was going to deliver his Father's indulgent Commendation to them, they seiz'd and stript him of his fine Vest, and cast him into the Pit, which at that time was dry and empty. Poor *Joseph* extremely frighted at this vile and unnatural Treatment begged his Life of his cruel Brothers, for he knew he must inevitably perish with Hunger there: But they are deaf to his Cries, being resolutely bent to destroy him. *Joseph* in vain complains of his hard-hearted Brothers, who are so regardless of him, that they had no sooner thus disposed of him, but they sat down, and regaled themselves with what Refreshments they had, whilst he was thus exposed to Famine and Despair. But Providence, the faithful Guardian of Innocence and Virtue, had a watchful Eye over him.

Before these unnatural Brethren put *Joseph* into the Pit, it was by *Reuben's* Advice that they did not immediately dispatch him; and now another of them, namely *Judah*, begins to feel some Pangs of Conscience, which was awaken'd by the opportune Approach of a Company of *Ismaelites* travelling from *Gilead*, and going down to *Egypt* with Spicery and other Merchandise. *Judah* lays

lays hold of this Opportunity, and considering with himself that poor *Joseph* was expos'd to certain Death in the Pit, proposes to the rest to sell him to these Merchants, urging the Unnaturalness of being instrumental in the Death of their own Brother, which would bring an indelible Stain of Guilt upon them; but by selling him, they should not only save his Life, but be Gainers by the Bargain. Considering this, they closed with the Proposal; and taking *Joseph* out of the Pit, notwithstanding his earnest Intreaty, having (now *Reuben* was absent) no Advocate for him amongst them, they sold him to the *Ishmaelite* Merchants for twenty Pieces of Silver; and these carrying him to *Egypt*, sold him to *Potiphar*, an * Officer of the King, and Captain of his Guards.

Reuben having persuaded his Brothers to put *Joseph* into the Pit, contrived it on purpose to preserve his Life, hoping he should find Means to deliver him from thence; and when they had bestow'd him there, on some Occasion or other he pretended to leave them: But soon after returning, and not finding *Joseph* in the Pit, he rent his Cloaths, and coming to his Brethren he cried out, & Alas! the Child is gone; what will become of me, or whither shall I go? ^h But they soon appeas'd him, acquainting him with what they

* *Officer*. This is in the Text called an *Eunuch*; which cannot be taken literally here of one that was castrated, but of one employed in some high Trust. It was the Custom indeed, and is still in those Parts, to commit the Keeping of the Queen, and Women of Quality to Eunuchs; but *Potiphar* here cannot be supposed to be such, for he had a Wife, as we may see in the Story of *Joseph*: Besides it was customary among the Eastern People to call their Noblemen *Eunuchs*.

^f *Rent*. This was the Custom of those Countries and Times to express the highest Grief; and of which, tho' afterwards more frequently used, this is the first Instance we have.

^g *Alas!* *Reuben* having greatly offended his Father before in his Trespas with

Bilhah his concubinary Wife, and probably hoping to have regained his Favour by preserving his favourite Son, and restoring him safe to him, having now lost the Hope of that Advantage, and reasonably fearing that his Father's Displeasure would fall heaviest on him, both as he was highly offended with him already, and as he being the eldest, should have taken most Care of the Younger, was exceedingly troubled for the Loss of *Joseph*.

^h *But, &c.* Here the Story in the Text seems to break off abruptly; but it must be supposed in Parity of Reason, that he join'd with them in contriving to take the Suspicion off to their Father of having murder'd their Brother, and consequently that they had acquainted him with the selling of *Joseph* in his Absence.

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GENESIS CHAP. XXXVII. ¹⁸
Josephs coat is brought to his Father.



GENESIS 37. Verse 33.
*And he knew it, and said, it is my sons
coat; an evil beast hath devoured him:
Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.* 96.



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had done in his Absence; and then they began to contrive how to manage the Matter to their Father, so as to take off all Suspicion from themselves; which they did by dipping *Joseph's* Vest in the Blood of a Kid, and sent it to him, with this Message, "This we have found; see whether it be thy Son's Coat or no." The bloody Fragment too soon convinced poor old *Jacob* to whom it belonged; and not in the least suspecting any human Creature could be guilty of such unnatural Cruelty, concludes some wild Beast had devoured him. This was the greatest Trial *Jacob* ever yet underwent; the Loss of his beloved *Rachel*, though the Joy of his Soul, and Delight of his Eyes, was a Debt due to Nature, and which she paid in a natural Way; but the Loss of *Joseph* far exceeded all the rest; he is, as his Father might reasonably suppose, torn in Pieces, barbarously mangled by a Brute, and cut off before his Time. The mournful Parent is lavish in his Grief, expressing it not after the common but unusual manner: He not only rent his Cloaths, but put on ⁱ Sackcloth, and mourn'd a ^k long Time for his dear *Joseph*: And when his guilty Sons offered to comfort him, he rejected them, and in Despair declared he would never cease mourning so long as he lived.

But here we must for a while leave *Joseph*, that we may take Notice of some intermediate Passages. About the Time that this Affliction befel old *Israel*, his Son *Judah* had committed a great Fault in marrying a ^l *Canaanitish* Woman, by whom he had three Sons,
Er,

ⁱ Sackcloth. *Remben*, as we have hinted before, was the first we find that to express an exceeding Sorrow rent his Cloaths, which *Jacob* not only does (tho' it cannot be suppos'd in imitation of *Remben*, for that to be sure was conceal'd from him) but cloaths himself with Sackcloth, a Sort of coarse ordinary Habit, used afterwards by the *Israelites* in Mourning; of which Custom this is the first Instance.

^k Long Time. It is not particularly express'd how long *Jacob* mourned for *Joseph*, but it may be suppos'd to be to the Time that he heard *Joseph* was alive in *Egypt*; which was Two and twenty, or (as some will have it) Three and twenty Years after.

^l *Canaanitish*. See *Gen.* xxxviii. 2. The Transgression of *Judah* in marrying this Woman led him into a greater afterwards;
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Er, *Onan*, and *Shelah*; the Occasion of which was a Visit he made to *Hirah* the *Adullamite*, with whom he had contracted a Friendship, which proved a Snare to him: For being at *Hirah's* House, he fell in Love with the Daughter of a certain *Canaanite*, whose Name was *Shuab*, and married her, and by her he had the three Sons aforesaid. In process of Time, when *Er* his eldest Son was grown marriageable, he took a Wife for him whose Name was *Thamar*. But *Er* proving a wicked Man in the Sight of God, however he might appear to Men, God ⁿ took him off; after which *Judah* bids his second Son *Onan* marry his Brother's Widow, that the Family might not fail for want of Issue. Young *Onan* knowing that if *Thamar* should bear him any Children, the eldest would ^o inherit in the Name of his elder Brother that was dead, and not be accounted as his, seemingly obey'd his Father by going to *Thamar's* Apartment; but he disappointed them both, leaving his Bride unenjoy'd by him. But the manner of his Crime was so provoking to God, that he took him off as he had done his Brother.

The third Son, whose Name was *Shelah*, was too young; therefore *Judah* desired his Daughter-in-Law *Thamar* to retire to her Father's House, and to continue a Widow till his Son *Shelah* was grown up, and then he should marry her. *Thamar* did so, and waited till *Shelah* was come to Man's Estate; but finding

wards; which was not fully compleated till after *J. seph* was sold, and gone into *Egypt*; and therefore *Moses* deferred the first Part of it, that he might give the Story intire together.

^m Wicked. Both *Hebrew* and *Christian* Doctors agree that *Er* as well as *Onan* were guilty of *retreating of Generation*, which by the *Hebrews* is compar'd to Murder, and is therefore, *Gen. xxxviii. 10.* called *detestable*.

ⁿ Took. &c. What sort of Death they died is not mention'd by *Moses*. Some imagine they were killed by *Asmodeus* the Evil Angel, who slew the libidinous Husbands of *Sarra*, *Tobit iii. 7.*

Others think God shew'd some terrible Judgment upon them, by which it might appear, that they did not die a natural Death; but for their extraordinary Iniquities were taken off by God in an extraordinary Manner.

^o This was long before the Law, by which it was afterwards enjoined, *Deut. xxv. 5.* and yet, tho' this be the first Mention we have of it, it seems it was then a known Custom, and well understood even by young *Onan*. For he knew that the Issue should not be his, but that the First-born of such Marriage should be reputed his deceased Brother's, and bear his Name, as was afterwards declared, *Deut. xxv. 6.*

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GENESIS CHAP. XXXVIII.
Judah's incest with Tamar.

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GENESIS 38. Verse 18.

*And he said, what pledge shall I
give thee? And she said, Thy Signet,
thy bracelets, and thy Staff etc.* 98.



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no Performance of *Judah's* Promise, she resents this Neglect, and resolves to be reveng'd. Watching a Time therefore when her Father-in-Law went to *Timnab* to divert and comfort himself for the Death of his Wife, with his Friend *Hirah*, she disguised her self in the Habit of a common Prostitute, and planted her self in the Way that she knew *Judah* must unavoidably pass to go to *Timnab*. *Judah* seeing her, an unlawful Fire soon kindled in his libidinous Breast, and concluding her to be what she seem'd, addresses himself to her, who was as forward to receive him, as he was to offer his Service; only she was resolved to make sure of the Terms of his Entertainment before she would permit him to enjoy her. He promised her a Kid; but she having a further Design upon him, demands a Security for the Performance of his Promise, which they agree to be his Ring or Signet, his Staff and a Cloak, and to be deposited in her Hands till he sent the Kid. The Terms being agreed upon, they went together, and she proved with Child by him. *Judah* retiring, she stay'd not long behind him; but taking the Pledge went home with them, and dress'd her self in her Widow's Weeds. In the mean while *Judah* going to the Flock takes a Kid, and sent it by his Friend *Hirah* to redeem his Pledge: But *Hirah* not finding her, return'd and told *Judah*; who, thinking it best for his Reputation to make no further Inquiry after her, said, "Let her keep the Pledge, I will inquire no more after her, lest I expose my self."

About three Months after this, some body inform'd *Judah*, that his Daughter-in-Law had play'd the Harlot, and was with Child. He resenting the Dishonour done to his Family, not considering his own late Fol-

^e Cloak. Commentators and Versions differ much about this Part of the Pledge *Judah* gave to *Thamar*. Our Translations call it a *Bracelet*, but that is not very probable, for it is not clear, that in those Days the Men of *Israel* wore *Bracelets*. Some, as *Junius* and *Tremellius*, render it by *Judarim*, an Handkerchief.

Others will have it to be the *Mileta* or *Turban*; but this is improbable too. Indeed our Translation of 1610. renders it a Cloak, and seems to take it from the *Septuagint*, which call it *Hormiskon*, from the Greek Word *Hormos*, which signifies a Shoulder; and this seems the most likely of any.

ly, rashly passes Sentence on her unheard, ordering her to be brought out and ^a burnt. But *Thamar* producing the Pledge, sent them to *Judah* with this Message, That he should consider well what he did, for the Owner of the Pledge was the Man by whom she was with Child. *Judah* seeing himself thus caught own'd the Pledge, and reflecting on himself for the Injustice he had done her in not giving her to his Son *Shelah* as he had promised, excused her, declaring she was more ^r righteous than himself, thereby taking the whole upon himself.

The Time of her Delivery being come, she proved with Child of Twins; one of which putting out his Hand, the Midwife tied a Scarlet Thread about it to distinguish him for the First-born; but he drawing his Hand back, his Brother slipt by him, and came before him into the World: Whereupon he was called *Pharez*, which signifies a Breach; and the other with the Thread on his Hand was called *Zarah*. ^f Thus in

^a *Burnt*. As for the Crime of Adultery, of which *Thamar* was condemn'd, and of which on her Side she was guilty, (for she was espoused to *Shelah*) it was capital, being punishable with Death; but by what Right or Authority her Father-in-Law pass'd Sentence upon her, is the Question. The Ancients agree this best, supposing every one to be Judge or Chief Magistrate in his own Family; and tho' *Thamar* was a *Canaanite*, yet as she had married into *Judah's* Family, and had brought this Disgrace upon it, she was within the Cognisance of him; who may be supposed (by what followed) to have suspended the Sentence, if he had first inquired into the Cause of her being with Child. But however, as one well observes, *Judah* in this truly personated the Hypocrites, who conceal and favour their own Follies, but fall unmercifully upon others.

^r *Righteous*. He does not say that *Thamar* was more holy or chaste; but more righteous or just: Because *Thamar* had sinned more grievously in this Fact, it being Adultery as well as Incest in her, but Fornication and Incest in him. Nevertheless she was juster than he in this Respect; for *Judah* not keeping his Pro-

mise in marrying her to *Shelah* provok'd her to lay this Trap for him, resolving, since he would not let her have Children by *Shelah*, she would have them by him. And thus *Thamar* may be said to be more wicked in the Sight of or before God, but juster before *Judah*.

^f *Thus, &c.* Though this latter Part of *Judah's* Story relating to the Incest with his Daughter *Thamar* was acted after *Joseph* was sold, and while he was in *Egypt*, yet the former Part of it relating to his Marriage with *Shmah's* Daughter, and the Birth of his Three Sons by her, must needs have fallen out before *Joseph* was sold. For there being but two and twenty, or at the most three and twenty Years, between *Joseph's* being sold into *Egypt*, and *Jacob's* going thither to him, it could not be that in so short a Space *Judah* could marry a Wife, having three Sons at three several Births by her, marry two of those Sons successively to one Woman, defer the Marriage of the third Son to the same Woman, beyond the due Time, afterwards himself have Sons by the same Woman (his Daughter-in-Law) and one of those Sons, *Pharez*, beget two Sons *Hezron* and *Hamul*, *Gen. xvi. 12.* before *Jacob* went down to *Egypt*.

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stead of the Son raising up Issue to the deceased Brother, the Father raiseth Issue to his deceased Son; but he conversed no more with her afterwards.

In the beginning of *Joseph's* Story his Grandfather *Isaac* was alive and in Health, who lived longer than any since *Terah*; being an hundred and eighty Years old when he died, which was in the Year of the World 2229, and was buried by his Sons *Esau* and *Jacob* in the Cave that is in the Field of *Machpelah* near *Mamre*, which *Abraham* had bought of *Ephron* the *Hittite* for a * Burying-Place.

We will now return to *Joseph*; of whom the last Account that we gave was, that he was sold to *Potiphar* Captain of the King of *Egypt's* Guards, who was not a little fond of his Bargain, when he found what a faithful Slave he had bought: And that which advanced *Joseph* still more in his Master's Favour was, that he was sensible that the Lord made every Thing to prosper that he undertook. Prosperity and Faithfulness are indearing Qualities in all, but chiefly in a Servant; which recommended *Joseph* so much to *Potiphar*, that, as it were dismissing himself from any farther Trouble, he made him Steward over his House, leaving his whole Estate within and without Doors to his Care and Management; by which he drew a Blessing upon all that he had.

Poor *Joseph* thus happily placed, might reasonably expect to lead a comfortable Life, tho' in Slavery, and might hope for Liberty as the Reward of his faithful and advantageous Service. But his Virtue must pass some severe Trials before he can assure himself of an establish'd State of Peace and Tranquillity.

* Burying-place. What Time *Rebecca* *cob* left *Laban*. By which Computation *Isaac's* Wife died, is not set down any she must have been Nineteen Years old where in, the Holy Scriptures; only in when she married *Isaac* at Forty. But *Gen. xlix. 30, 31.* that she was buried surely if she were so old when she died, in the same Place where her Husband was. *Deborah* her Nurse must needs have lived But the *Rabbins* hold, that she died in to a great Age, who outlived her, and yet the Hundred thirty and seventh Year of her must be supposed to have been older than Age, which was the Hundred fifty and she when she undertook to be her Nurse. sixth of her Husband's, a Year before *Ja-*

Nature had been very bountiful to *Joseph* in bestowing on him a most beautiful Form, to which his early Years added a female Sweetness, as his Sex did a manly Grace. His Charms were not long unregarded; for his Master's Wife soon grew inamour'd of him, and after all the Signs of her Desire to draw the virtuous Youth into a wanton Familiarity with her fail'd; and that her eager Passion more strongly press'd her, she resolves to break thro' the Rules of her Sex, and court him in plain Terms.

It was not long before an Opportunity offer'd, the busy Fiend, Lust, seldom failing to assist his Servants, *Potiphar* being one Day upon Duty, and the rest of the Servants disposed at a Distance about their Work, none but the handsome *Hebrew* and his lascivious Mistress were in the House. The Lady's Passion had long rack'd her Thoughts how to contrive to come at her beautiful Slave; at last this fatal Opportunity offer'd, which she as readily imbraced, and in downright Words asked him to lie with her. This from one of her Sex and Quality was a great Surprise to our virtuous Innocent, who knew no other Way of Dealing with her, than first to expostulate the Heinousness of the Crime, and then give her a positive Denial. "You see my Master, *says he*, has trusted me with his whole Fortune and the Management of it, so that he knows not what is in the House, and has reserved nothing to himself but you, who are his Wife: With what Face then can I be so ungrateful to him who hath promoted me, and reposed so much Confidence in me, as to violate his Bed and offend God?" *Joseph* hoped this repulse would have mortified her lewd Desire; but she grows more eager and impatient, and taking the foresaid Opportunity, she caught him by the Cloak, and press'd him to lie with her. He not knowing how otherwise to get from her, left his Cloak in her Hand, and fled.

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GENESIS CHAP. XXXIX. 20
 Joseph flies from his Mistress.



GENESIS 39. Verse 12.

*And she caught him by his garment, say-
 ing, Lie with me: and he left his garment
 in her hand, & fled, and got him out.* 102.

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Despairing now of ever obtaining her Desire, and fearing a Discovery of her lewd Passion, being agitated by Revenge she resolves to prevent his accusing her, by making the first Charge against him; and therefore politickly making a Sham-Out-cry, and holding *Joseph's* Garment in her Hand, some of the Servants that were nearest the House ran in to her Assistance. "See, said she, how my Lord hath encouraged an " *Hebrew* to expose us to Scorn and Infamy!" This she spoke with Design to set them against *Joseph*, (because the *Egyptians* hated the *Hebrews*) and to engage them to take Part with her, if *Joseph* should insist on his Innocence. Then craftily going on with her Story she told them, That he came in to force her; but she crying out, he ran away, and left his Cloak. Having thus prepared the Servants to second her Charge against *Joseph*, she laid up his Cloak as an Evidence against her Lord's Return. *Potiphar* being come home, she flies to him with Tears, and makes her complaint to him of *Joseph's* Insolence in the most aggravating Expressions. The credulous Husband, not in the least suspecting his Wife's Treachery, and considering the Circumstance of the Cloak without examining *Joseph's* Virtue, inflamed with Rage and Jealousy, without further Inquiry, commits him to the Royal Prison.

Joseph thus distress'd in a strange Land, without Friend or Relation to plead his Cause, soon finds the comfortable Effect of an innocent Mind; his Virtue is his Guard, and Providence his Protection, which God, who never leaves his Servants destitute, extended in a wonderful manner to him, making his Imprisonment the Cause of his after Greatness; for *Joseph* by his virtuous and harmless Deportment grew into so great Favour with his Keeper that he committed all the Prisoners to *Joseph's* Care, and all Things in the

^a *Hebrew*. She called *Joseph* not by his own Name, but by the Name of his People, [an *Hebrew*] to set them the more

against him; for the *Egyptians* hated the *Hebrews*.

Prison were managed by his Order and Direction; for the Jailer was sensible that God prosper'd him, and he was now Overseer of the Prison, as he had been before of *Potiphar's* House.

Whilst *Joseph* was a Prisoner, it happened, that the King's chief Butler and Baker were committed to the same Prison where *Joseph* was confin'd, and the Keeper charging *Joseph* with the Care of them, he waited on them himself; by which Means he grew acquainted with them. In one and the same Night, while they were in Prison, these two Officers dreamed each of them a Dream. *Joseph* coming into their Apartment in the Morning, and finding them both melancholy, he demanded the Cause of their Uneasiness. They readily answered, and told him, that they had each dreamed a Dream that Night, and being under Confinement they had no Opportunity of getting their Dreams interpreted. *Joseph* endeavouring to take them off from that superstitious Humour of trusting to Diviners, or Soothsayers, (which was very common to the *Egyptians*) told them, Interpretations belonged to God, and desired to know their Dreams. The Butler told him he dreamt he saw a Vine, which had three Branches, that by degrees budded, then blossom'd, and at last bore ripe Grapes; that he held *Pharaoh's* Cup in his Hand, squeez'd out the Juice of the Grapes, and gave it to *Pharaoh* to drink. *Joseph* no sooner heard the Butler's Dream, but he gave him a positive Interpretation of it. The three Branches, says he, signify three Days; within which Time *Pharaoh* will restore thee to thy Place. This was a joyful Interpretation to the Butler, of whom *Joseph* desired nothing in Return, but to remember him when he was in his Prosperity, and to intreat *Pharaoh* to let him out of Prison; because he had been fraudulently brought from his own Country, and without any just Cause cast into Prison. No question but the Butler readily promised, tho' he was long in performing.

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GENESIS CHAP. XLI. ²¹

Pharaoh's two dreams.



GENESIS 41. Verse 1.

*And it came to pass at the end of
two full Years, that Pharaoh dreamed,
and behold, he stood by the river, &c.*



Book 1

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The Baker hearing what a happy Interpretation the Butler had of his Dream, was the forwarder in telling his Dream also to *Joseph*. I dreamt (said he) that I had three Baskets on my Head, and in the uppermost was all manner of baked Meats for the King, and the Birds did eat them out of the Basket, that was on my Head. *Joseph* as readily interprets this as the other, but in a different Manner. The three Baskets (says he) are three Days, at the end of which *Pharaoh* will hang thee on a Gibbet, where the Birds shall devour thy Flesh. The Event according to *Joseph's* Prediction answer'd; for three Days after the Butler was restored, and the Baker hanged.

Any one would be apt to think that the Obligation the Butler lay under to *Joseph* should not long have slept in his Breast; but that having, as Cup-bearer, continual Opportunities of remembring *Joseph's* Condition, common Gratitude might have stirr'd up some Thought advantageous to *Joseph*. But God did not think fit as yet; his Virtue had not pass'd Trials enough. Wherefore at the End of two Years a favourable Opportunity offer'd it self: For then *Pharaoh* himself dreamt, That as he was walking on the Banks of the *Nile*, he saw seven fat Kine which fed in the Marshes; after which he saw seven others frightful to behold, and exceeding lean, which fed along the Banks, and these last devour'd the former. This Dream waked him; but falling asleep again, he dreamt a second Dream; which was, That he saw seven beauteous and full Ears of Corn shooting out from one Stalk, and seven others very small and wither'd devoured the first which were so beautiful. *Pharaoh* walking in a great Consternation called his People about him, and the Dream making a strong Impression on him, he summon'd all his Magicians and Diviners, and told them his Dreams; but there was not one that could expound them.

Now at last did God put it into the Heart of the chief Butler to remember *Joseph*: Wherefore he seeing the
King's

King's Perplexity for want of having the Dreams interpreted, acquainted him that when he and the chief Baker were under his Majesty's Displeasure in Prison, each of them in the same Night dreamt a Dream, which a young Man, an *Hebrew*, Servant to the Captain of the Guard, did interpret to them, just as the Event answer'd.

Pharaoh pleased at this Discovery of an Interpreter immediately sent for *Joseph*, and they that went for him brought him hastily out of the Prison; and having shav'd and dress'd himself, he was introduced into his Presence. *Pharaoh* impatient to know the Meaning of them, told *Joseph* he had had two Dreams, which none of his own Subjects could interpret, and was inform'd he was skilful in the Art of Interpreting.

Joseph, unwilling to assume any Thing that did not belong to him, declined the Character *Pharaoh* was pleased to give him; and told him, It is from God, and not from me, that the King shall receive a happy Exposition of his Dreams. *Pharaoh* then related to *Joseph* his Dreams, who told him they both signified the same Thing, and that it was God's Will thereby to give *Pharaoh* to understand what was to happen in the Time to come: That the seven fat Kine and full Ears denoted the same Thing, and signified seven Years of Plenty: That the seven lean Kine and seven wither'd Ears express'd seven Years of Famine, which were to follow: That there would be seven fruitful Years, follow'd by seven Years so barren, that the former Plenty should be forgot, and all the Country would be consumed with Famine; and that the double Dream was a Token of the Certainty of the Event.

Joseph, having thus interpreted *Pharaoh's* Dream, proceeds to advise him how to improve the Dreams to Advantage, by making Choice of some wise and able Minister, who under him should be invested with full Power over all *Egypt*, that he might appoint Officers in all the Towns, who should, during the se-

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ven Years of Plenty, lay up in publick Granaries the fifth Part of the Product of the Earth; and that all the said Store should be at the King's Disposal, and secured in the Cities, to be preserv'd against the seven Years of Scarcity. *Pharaoh* approved of the Counsel as well as the Interpretation, and is not long in making his Choice; for turning to his own Subjects he said, "Can we find such an one as this is, a Man in whom is the Spirit of God?" And then turning to *Joseph*, said, "Since God hath shewed thee all this, I know none so discreet and wise as thou art: Thou therefore shalt be the Man. Thou shalt be over my House; and all my Subjects shall be at thy Command: Only in the Throne will I be greater than thee." Then he bestow'd the Ensigns of Royalty upon him, taking the Ring off his own Hand, and putting it on *Joseph's*, with other Marks of Distinction; and causing him to ride in the second Chariot, ordered his Herald to proclaim before him "Abreth, in Token of Honour and Subjection, as Viceroy of the Country.

The King having invested him with full Power, to ingage him more firmly to his Interest, changes his Name from *Joseph* to **Zaphnath-paaneah*, and matches him into a Noble Family, giving him for Wife *Ase-nath* the Daughter of *Potiphar*, Prince of *On*. And now the seven plenteous Years beginning, in which the Earth brought forth in great abundance, *Joseph*

* *Abreth*. This is a Word of uncertain Signification, but render'd by some *Saviour of the World*, by some *Tender Father*, and by others *Bow the Knee*; which last seems most proper in this Place, because wherever he came in the Chariot, they bowed the Knee before him in Token of Honour and Subjection to him, as he was Chief Governor of *Egypt*.

* *Zaphnath-paaneah*. That is, a *Revealer of Secrets*, or one to whom Secrets are revealed.

* *Potiphar*. This is not that *Potiphar*, who bought *Joseph* of the *Ismaelites*; for he was a Military Man. Besides, it was not likely *Joseph* would marry the Daughter of her that had traduced him so vilely as that *Potiphar's* Wife had done;

but it was another of the same Name, who was a Priest as well as a Prince.

* *On*. This Place was also called *Heliopolis*, or the City of the Sun, from the Worship the Inhabitants there did to the Sun. Some take *Potiphar*, *Joseph's* Father-in-Law, to have been Priest of *On*; but the Hebrew Word signifying indifferently Prince or Priest, *Tremellius* and *Janus* render it Prince both here and after in *Chap. xlvii. 22, & 26.* and give Reasons to prove it should be read Princes, not Priests. Some *English* Translations render it Prince in the Text, and set Priest in the Margin. And the last Translation, though it renders it Priest in the Text, yet sets Prince and Princes in the Margin.

began

began his Circuit, and visiting all Parts of *Egypt*, he gathered up all the Food which could be spared from present Use, and laid it up in Store-houses. This he continued to do every one of the seven fruitful Years, till he had gotten such a Quantity that it was impossible to keep Account of it. In this fruitful Time God blessed *Joseph* with two Sons; The eldest of which he called ^a *Manasseh*, and the younger ^b *Ephraim*.

And now the seven Years of Plenty being expired, the seven Years of Scarcity commenced; and which was general, not only in *Egypt*, but in the neighbouring Countries. But in *Egypt* by *Joseph*'s Providence they were furnished with Provision, which he sold out not only to the *Egyptians*, but to those also that came out of other Countries.

In the ^c second Year of the Famine, amongst those that came to *Egypt* to buy Food were *Joseph*'s ten Brethren, who by their Father *Jacob*'s Order came for that Purpose from *Canaan*, where the Famine raged more than in *Egypt*, because there were no Stores laid up there. Being come into *Egypt* they appeared before *Joseph*, who had the intire Disposall of the Corn; and as soon as they were introduced, they ^d bowed their Heads to the Ground before him. *Joseph* no sooner set Eyes on them but he knew them; and having a Mind to terrify them, (which was but a poor Revenge for what they had made him suffer,) and try what Effect some little Severity or Threat would have, to bring them to a Sense of their unnatural Dealing with him, using an Interpreter to avoid Suspicion, he roughly asked them whence they came. They answer'd, From the Land of *Canaan* to buy Provisions. He replied,

^a *Manasseh*. Which signifies Forgetting: For, said he, God hath made me forget all my Toil, and my Father's House.

^b *Ephraim*. This signifies Fruitful: For, said he, God hath caused me to be fruitful in mine Affliction.

^c Second. See Gen. xlv. 11.

^d Bow'd. Here was a Completion of the first of *Joseph*'s Dreams which he dream'd, prognosticating his future Greatness, which now began to be fulfilled.

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they were Spies, and came to make Discovery of the Nakedness of the Country. They assure him they came upon no such Design, but only to buy Corn; that they were no Enemies, nor had any Thoughts of doing Harm: * That they were all one Man's Sons, that had been twelve formerly, whereof the youngest was with their Father, the next to him dead. But Joseph repeating the Charge upon them, tells them they are Spies: To try them, he would put it upon this Issue; "Ye say ye have a younger Brother; agree upon one of you to go and fetch him, and ye shall be kept in Prison the mean Time, that I may be satisfied whether what you say be true; otherwise, as sure as ^fPharaoh lives, I shall look upon you as Spies." Then putting them into safe Custody for three Days, in which Time they might consult what was best to be done, on the third Day he commands them to be brought before him, and turning to them with an Air of Tenderness, tells them that he feared God, and therefore would act justly by them; and being unwilling that their Families should suffer for their Faults, or that they should suffer if they were innocent, therefore, (says he) do this to save your Lives: "If ye be true Men, let one of your Brethren be bound in Prison, and go ye, carry Corn to prevent the famishing of your Families: But be sure to bring your youngest Brother unto me; so shall you be justified for honest Men, and your Lives be preserved.

Not knowing how to help themselves, and not daring to expostulate with one so much their Superior, and in whose Power they were, they unanimously

* *That, &c.* By this they suggested the Improbability of their being Spies, being all Brethren the Sons of one Man, since no Man in his right Wits would send so many and all of his own Family, upon so dangerous and capital an Enterprize.

^f *Pharaoh.* The Egyptians being Idolaters, and using to swear by the Life of their King, some think that Joseph liv-

ing among them, had learn'd some of their Corruptions; and this is the rather believed, because it is tender'd By the *Life of Pharaoh*: From which Charge of Swearing Bishop *Sanders* defends Joseph, *Praet.* 5. *Set.* 7. Some will have it a Prayer for his Life, &c. But in itself it looks more like a vehement Obtestation than an Oath.

agreed.

agreed. But at the same Time their own Necessity put them in Mind of the sad Condition of their poor Brother *Joseph*, who, for ought they knew, might be dead, or under some miserable Circumstance of Life, reproaching one another, they cry'd, "Justly do we now suffer for our Cruelty to our Brother, to whom we refused Mercy, though he begged it in the Anguish of his Soul: Therefore God is just in sending this Distress upon us." Hereupon *Reuben*, that dissuaded them from murdering *Joseph*, and advised them to put him into the Pit, that he might find some Way of preserving him, "Aye, says he, did not I intreat you not to commit that Crime against our Brother? See, now his Blood is required of us."

Joseph, as has been said, spoke to them by an Interpreter, who must be supposed absent now, because he heard and understood their Discourse, they speaking freely to one another before him, because they thought he did not understand them: But their Words so affected him, to see them in this Distress, (though but a sham one) that he was forced to withdraw for a While to give vent to his Tears: After which returning, and by his Interpreter conversing with them, he took *Simeon*, and causing him to be bound in their Sight, he set the rest at Liberty, who having their Sacks by his Order fill'd with Corn, and Provision given them for their Journey, they loaded their Asses, and departed.

When they came to their Inn the first Night, one of them opening his Sack to give his Ass Provender, spied his Money in the Mouth of his Sack, (for *Joseph* had ordered his Steward to put every Man's Money into his Sack again.) Being surpriz'd at this, he tells the rest what had happen'd to him; who seeing the Money, looked confusedly one on the other, and the Sense of their Guilt concerning *Joseph* haunting them, they looked upon this as an additional Judgment of God upon them.

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Being arrived in *Canaan*, they gave their Father an Account of their Journey, relating the Treatment they received from the Viceroy of *Egypt*; how he had suspected them to be Spies, of which they had no Way to clear themselves but by leaving *Simeon* bound in Prison as a Pledge till they should bring *Benjamin*, to shew that what they had told him of their Family was true. This News was very ungrateful to *Jacob*, which was much increased when, upon the opening of their Sacks, they found every Man's Money in his Sack; for they feared that when they should have cleared themselves of being Spies, this might afford new Matter of Accusation. Upon which the poor afflicted Father breaks into this Complaint, crying, "Ye have deprived me of my Children: *Joseph* is dead, and *Simeon* is lost to me; and now ye will take my Darling *Benjamin* away too. These Things are hard upon me." *Reuben*, thinking to persuade his Father to consent to part with *Benjamin*, desired him to commit him to his Care, ingaging to bring him safe to him again; "Which if I do not, said he, slay & two of my Sons."

This unnatural Pledge carried but little Weight in it with *Jacob*, for he was easily sensible how sad a Recompence it would be to him, for the Loss of his Son to kill two of his Grandsons: So that this Proposal, instead of allaying did but aggravate his Grief, and made him resolve not to trust *Benjamin* with them: "For, said he, his Brother *Joseph* (his only Brother by the Mother) is dead, (for so he and they all thought,) and he is left alone; and if any Mischief befall him by the Way, then will ye bring down my Grey Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave."

In these Sorts of Debates they spent the Time till Necessity put them in Mind of returning to *Egypt*:

& Two. *Reuben* at this Time had four went down afterwards with *Jacob* into *Egypt*, as appears from *Gen. xli. 9.* which

For the Famine increasing every Day, and the Provision they had brought being near spent, *Jacob* order'd his Sons to repair to *Egypt* again, taking no Notice of the Obligation the Viceroy had laid upon them, not to see his Face again without their Brother *Benjamin*. His Sons knew 'twas in vain for them to go without him; and how to persuade their Father to part with him was hitherto an insuperable Difficulty. *Reuben* had tried his Skill to no Purpose before, all his Rhetorick and Arguments proving ineffectual to move the Patriarch to a Compliance; therefore *Judah* accosts him in somewhat a rougher Manner, and in very short and down-right Terms urges the Necessity of carrying *Benjamin* with them, "It is in vain, says he, for us to go; for the Viceroy solemnly protested that we should see his Face no more, except we brought our Brother with us." This put poor *Jacob* to a great Straight, and drew from him a fresh Complaint: "Why, says he, did ye deal so unkindly by me, as to tell him ye had another Brother?" They in Excuse answer'd, "He examined us so strictly of our Family and Condition we could not avoid it; for he inquired particularly whether our Father was yet alive; and whether we had another Brother: Besides, could we expect that he should oblige us to bring our Brother with us?" *Judah* observing his Father to begin to waver in his Resolution, reiterates the Necessity of their Return, and presses his Father to consent, saying, "Send the Child with me, and we will go, that we may live, and not perish by Famine. I will be Surety for him, and at my Hand shalt thou require him: If I bring him not safe again, then let me bear the Blame for ever.

^b It is, &c. Our English, and some Latin Versions, as likewise the Septuagint, render this very harshly, and make *Judah* very bluntly and irreverently tell his Father they will not go without *Benjamin*, which is very indecent from a Son

to a Parent. Wherefore *Junius* softens the Expression, *We cannot* go without our Brother, unless we violate our Promise, and hazard the Displeasure of the Viceroy.

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At last Fondness submits to Necessity, which drew the good old Patriarch into a Compliance more than all their Reasons and Importunities. "Since there is no Remedy, said he, take some of the best Fruits, and carry the Man a ⁱ Present, some Turpentine, some Dates, some Storax, Laudanum, &c. Take with you also ^k double Money, and the Money that was brought back in your Sacks, perhaps it was an Over-sight, and take your Brother Benjamin; and Almighty God incline the Viceroy to be favourable to you that he may send back your other Brother and Benjamin." Then taking Leave of them, he said, "If I be depriv'd of my Children, I am depriv'd." Thus quietly submitting all to the Disposal of Providence, he dismiss'd them; who, having their Brother Benjamin, double Money, and a Present to appease the angry Governor with, go on cheerfully, and hope to appear with some Credit and Assurance before him.

Being come into Egypt, they appeared before Joseph, who seeing them, and Benjamin in their Company, bad

ⁱ Present. The Versions have ill express'd the Present which Jacob sent to Joseph. Gen. xliii. 11. Carry down the Man a Present, a little Balm, and a little Honey, Spices, &c. For the Text evidently speaks of Fruits, and such things as were taken from Trees; and the Balm did not grow in Judea, but on this side Jordan, near Engeddi and Jericho, and not on the other side in the Country of Gilead, where Jacob was then, as several Historians relate. Besides, the Balm was unknown in Judea before the Days of Solomon, in which the Queen of Sheba brought it thither from Arabia Felix, as Josephus affirms.

It is evident that the Hebrew Word *Meth* signifies some particular Drug, if we compare Gen. xxxvii. 25. with this Text, Gen. xxxiv. 11. And since the Storax is very common in Syria, whence the Arabians transport it elsewhere, it is probable that Aquila had Reason to render this Term by that of Storax, as Bochart has prov'd at large. He proves also that the Word *Seri* cannot signify Balm, but only Resin or Turpentine, as several have render'd it. And J. H.

Ursin has proved that the Hebrew Word *Loth* signifies Laudanum.

The Versions likewise confound the Honey with the Dates, because the Hebrew expresses both by the same Name.

Some perhaps may wonder that such things as this Present was made up of could be had in so great a Famine; But let them consider that this was but the second Year of the seven, and these things not being used for common Food, there might some small Quantity of the old Stock remain.

^k Double Money. It's strange that some should take this double Money to be order'd by Jacob to make amends for the Money that they brought back in their Sacks, whereas the very next Words in the Text clear that, mentioning the Money found in their Sacks. This double Money then must be order'd by Jacob upon Consideration that as the Famine increased, the Price of Provisions would likewise be advanced; and therefore he ordered them to take the more Money that they might not be disappointed.

his Steward to bring them into the House, and provide for their Entertainment, for they should dine with him. The Steward obeyed, and conducted them in. This put them into a new Fright, not knowing the Honour that was intended them; and therefore conferring together, they concluded it was upon the Account of the Money they had found in their Sacks, and that they should be made Slaves upon that Pretence; to prevent which, as they thought, they immediately applied themselves to the Steward, telling him they had found that Money in their Sacks, which they had brought again, with more to buy what they wanted. The Steward bid them fear nothing; for it was their God, and the God of their Fathers, who had put that Treasure into their Sacks; for he had received their Money, and was satisfied, and finding them somewhat dejected, to comfort them he brought forth their Brother *Simeon* to them, and gave Order for Water to wash their Feet, and that Provender should be given to their Asses.

And now being informed that they were to dine with the Viceroy, they got their Present ready against he came; which he soon did, and they offered him their Present with the most submissive Prostration. *Joseph* saluted them in a friendly manner, and asked them how their Father did, the old Man they had told him of, whether he was still alive? They answer'd him, "Thy Servant, our Father is still alive" and well:" And they¹ bowed low. *Joseph* spoke to his Brethren in general, but his Eyes were chiefly imployed in surveying his Brother *Benjamin*, who was most dear to him of any of them; therefore very familiarly addressing himself to them concerning him, he asked, "Is this your younger Brother, whom you" mentioned?" And not waiting for an Answer, he

¹ Bowed. In this Action of theirs, no Doubt *Joseph* could not but observe the Accomplishment of his first Dream,

Gen. xxxvii. 7. wherein their Sheaves made Obeisance to his.

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thus kindly salutes him, "God be gracious to thee my Son." *Joseph's* Affection shew'd it self in his Eyes, which forced him to withdraw, that he might not yet discover himself; therefore retiring hastily to his Chamber, he there gave his Passion Vent in a Flood of Tears; which as soon as he had dried up, and washed his Face, that it might not be observed he had wept, he returned very cheerfully into the Room to them, giving Order for Dinner to be brought in. Immediately the Tables are spread. *Joseph*, by reason of his Dignity, sat by himself; for his Brethren there was Provision made by themselves; and for the *Egyptians*, who were to dine in his Company, by themselves, because the *Egyptians* disdain'd to eat with such inferior People as Shepherds, for such the *Hebrews* were. The eleven Brethren being placed in their Seats according to the exact Order of their Births, could not forbear admiring at the ^m Strangeness of the Thing. However, being kindly entertain'd, (for *Joseph* sent to each of them their Mefs from his Table, but to *Benjamin* he sent a Mefs five Times as much as any of theirs) they drank freely, and were merry with him.

Things succeeding thus happily beyond the Expectation of *Jacob's* Sons, they might reasonably conclude all Dangers and Storms of Calamity over: But, alas! the sharpest Trial is yet to come: Their hard Hearts, which could not be moved at the Anguish of *Joseph's* Soul, must be afflicted still more. And tho' *Joseph* for the Sake of his Brother *Benjamin* longed to discover himself, yet he delay'd to do it for some time, till he had put them into another Fright, to take an innocent Revenge on them for their cruel Usage of him; which he put in Execution thus: He ordered his

^m Strangeness. The Reason of the Brethren's marvelling one at another not being expressed, leaves it uncertain whether they marvelled at the Manner and Order of the Entertainment, or whether, not being placed by themselves,

as some think, but by *Joseph*, or his Servants by his Appointment, they marvelled how he came to understand the Order of their Ages, to dispose them so rightly in their due Ranks.

Steward to fill their Sacks with Corn, and to put the Money into every Man's Sack; but in the youngest's Sack to put the Silver Cup he used to drink out of. This done, the next Morning early they set homeward; but they were not gone far, when *Joseph*, calling his Steward, bad him pursue them, and charge them with stealing his Cup. He soon overtook them; and first reproaching them for their Ingratitude, he then demands the Cup. They knowing their Innocence, seemed not affected with the Charge, but, as an Argument of their Probity and just Dealing, they reminded him of their bringing back the Money which they found in their Sacks. But to put the Matter out of all Doubt, in Confidence of their Innocency, they offered to stand a Search under the severest Penalties; "With whomsoever of thy Servants, *say they*, it shall be found, let him die, and we also will be my Lord's Bondmen." The Steward took them at their Word, but with this Mitigation, that only he on whom the Cup should be found should be his Servant, and the rest be blameless. Then every one unloaded his Beast, and as they opened the Sacks he searched them, beginning at the eldest, and so going on to the youngest, found the Cup in *Benjamin's* Sack. Here was a plain Conviction, and yet nobody guilty: The poor Youth on whom it was taken was struck with Horror and Amazement; it was to no Purpose to offer at a Defence, for upon such Demonstration none would believe him: Besides, by mutual

^a *Bondmen*. The Scripture sometimes gives the Name of Children not only to those that are in Childhood, but likewise to Persons who are simple and innocent, and whose Sincerity has not been corrupted by the Malice of the World, as in *Mat. xi. 25.* and in *1 John ii. 12. 14.* It likewise gives the Name of Son to those who are most in Esteem, as in *Gen. xliii. 39.* And the Name of Children to Slaves and Servants, as *St. Augustin* hath observed on these Words, *and we will be the Children of my Lord*, *Gen. xlii. 9.* which the *Geneva*

Version and ours have very well render'd, *and we also will be my Lord's Bondmen*. And likewise where the Original says, *Our Father thy Child is well*, *Gen. xliii. 28.* these two Versions have very well render'd it, *Thy Servant our Father is in good Health*. For the Quality of Children could neither agree to *Jacob* or his Sons upon that Occasion. The *Latins* did also use the Word *Puer* often in the same Sense; and it is manifestly so taken in some other Places of Scripture.

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Agreement between them and the Steward, *Benjamin's* Life was forfeited, at least his Liberty. Their Grief and Despair shew'd it self in their rending their Clothes, and not knowing what to say to palliate or excuse the Fact, they silently load their Asses, and in a mournful Manner return to the City.

Joseph stay'd at home impatiently expecting their coming, who no sooner enter'd into his Presence but they fell to the Ground in a most sorrowful Submission: And before they could offer the least Defence or Excuse for themselves *Joseph* sternly accosts them, saying, "What is this ye have done? Could you "imagine ye should pass undiscover'd?" In the midst of this great Consternation and Fear, *Judah* prostrating himself in a pitiful Manner cries out, "We have "nothing to say for our selves: God hath found out "our Sins, and we must remain Slaves with him in "whose Sack the Cup was found. Not so, said "*Joseph*, God forbid I should do such an Injustice: "He only who stole the Cup shall be my Slave; but "as for the rest of you, return home to your Father.

Judah finding the Viceroy begin to melt, took the Freedom to approach a little nearer, and in a very moving Speech repeated the whole Case between them and their Father, in Relation to their bringing *Benjamin* into *Egypt*, to take off the Suspicion of their being Spies: Then passionately describing the melancholy Condition of their Father for the Loss of his Son *Joseph*; the extream Fondness he had for his Son *Benjamin*; the Difficulty they had to prevail with their Father to trust his beloved *Benjamin* with them, so that himself was forced to become Security for the safe Return of his Brother; and that since his Father's Life was wrapt up in the Lad, if they should return without him it would occasion his Death, and they should draw the Curse upon themselves of bringing their Father's grey Hairs with Sorrow to the Grave; concluded his Speech with this Petition, "Now therefore, I beseech my Lord, let me thy Ser-

“ want abide here a Slave instead of the Lad, and let him
 “ go up with his Brethren; for how shall I see my Fa-
 “ ther without him? *Joseph* was so sensibly touch'd
 with this moving Harangue of *Judah's*, that he could
 no longer act the majestick Part of Viceroy and Judge;
 and therefore causing all others to withdraw, that he
 might with more affectionate Freedom discover him-
 self, breaking forth into a loud Weeping, he cried to
 his Brethren, “ I am *Joseph*, doth my Father yet live?”
 The Name of *Joseph* rouzed the Sense of their Guilt, to
 which the Dread of the Power he had now to revenge
 himself on them did not a little contribute; so that in
 this terrible Confusion they were not able to answer
 him.

Now struggling Nature appeared more plainly' in *Jo-
 seph's* Eyes and Voice; for observing the Disorder of
 his Brethren, in a compassionate Accent he bids them
 come near him, and assures them he was their very
 Brother *Joseph*, whom they sold; and tho' he had
 acted with the Austerity of a Viceroy, he still retain'd
 the Tendernefs of a Brother; and to mitigate the Re-
 membrance of their Cruelty towards him, he bids
 them no longer afflict themselves with the Thoughts of
 it, for it was all ° God's Doing, who permitted them
 so to dispose of him for their Preservation: God, *saieth*
 “ he, sent me hither before you, to preserve you a
 “ Posterity in the Earth, and to save your Lives by a
 “ great Deliverance. Ye ought therefore to be con-
 “ vinced that it was not you that sent me hither, but
 “ God, who, by the various Dispensations of his Provi-
 “ dence hath brought me to this Dignity and Power
 “ here, that I may be an Instrument of preserving the
 “ Family of the Faithful. For this End hath God made
 “ me as a P Father to *Pharaoh* and his People, that by my
 “ Counsel and Care I might preserve them; therefore
 “ am

° *God's Doing*. Though God detests Scripture besides this.
 Sin; yet he often turns the Wickedness P Father. Our Versions render this
 of Man to serve his Glory: Of which absolutely; but the *Latin* and the *Septua-*
 there are frequent Instances in holy gints more properly, as a Father; that
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GENESIS CHAP. XLV. ²²
Joseph maketh himself known to his brethren.



GENESIS 45. Verse 14.
*And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's
neck, and wept, and Benjamin wept
upon his neck.*



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" am I made Lord of the King's House, and Chief
 " Ruler over all the Land of *Egypt*." Then he pro-
 poses the fetching of his Father, with the whole Fa-
 mily of *Israel*, from *Canaan* to *Egypt*; bidding them
 deliver this Message to him, " God hath made me Lord
 of all *Egypt*, therefore defer not coming; for I will
 " provide ¹ *Goshen* for the Place of thy Habitation, and
 " there will I nourish thee and thy Family, lest they
 " come to want." And that they might not ² doubt
 that he was indeed their Brother *Joseph*, he told them,
 " Your Eyes see and the Eyes of my Brother *Benjamin*,
 " (whom my Father will especially regard,) that it is I
 " my self that speak to you. And to comfort my Fa-
 " ther, tell him of my Glory here, and all that you
 " have seen; and make haste to conduct him hither."
 Then taking *Benjamin* in his Arms, they wept for Joy;
 and, as a Seal of Pardon for all Offences, he tenderly
 imbraced and kissed them severally, and wept over them.
Joseph's kind Carriage and Reconciliation having dis-
 pelled their Fears and Apprehensions of the severe
 Resentment they might justly have expected from him,
 they took Heart, and conversed familiarly with him.

The Report of the Arrival of *Joseph*'s Brethren soon
 spread in *Pharaoh*'s Court, which, for the great Respect
 all had to *Joseph*, was very agreeable to the King and all
 about him; who immediately orders *Joseph* to send his
 Brethren to conduct his Father, and all that belonged to
 him, into *Egypt*, where he should share of the best
 during the Famine, of which there were five Years to
 come. *Joseph* gladly obeys, and accordingly provides
 Carriages and Food for their Journey. But for a Present

¹ Governor, Counsellor, or Moderator;
 for so *Joseph* by his Wisdom had all the
 Kingdom of *Egypt*, and Family of *Pha-
 raoh*, committed to his Care, and there-
 fore might justly be called Father of the
 Kingdom under the King. Thus *Ha-
 man* is in *Esth.* xiii. 6. called a second Fa-
 ther to *Artaxerxes*; which was reckoned
 the first Title of Honour and Dignity in
 the Courts of *Tyre*, *Egypt*, and *Persia*.
² *Goshen*. This was the fruitfulest Part

of all *Egypt*, especially for Pastorage;
 and therefore the most commodious for
 them who were brought up Shepherds,
 and the shortest Journey for him to make
 as being nearest *Canaan*.

² Doubt. *Joseph* having before spoken
 to them by an Interpreter, he bids them
 observe that now he spoke to them in the
Hebrew Tongue, they might the better be
 assured that it was he their Brother that
 had hitherto conversed with them.

to his Father, he sent ten Asses laden with the choicest Dainties *Egypt* afforded, and ten She-Asses laden with Corn and Provisions for him by the Way. And the more to cheer his Brethren, and confirm his Love to them, he gave to each of them Changes of Raiment; but to distinguish *Benjamin* from the rest, he gave him three hundred Pieces of Silver, and five Changes or Suits of Clothes: And knowing their quarrelsome Disposition, and fearing they should enter into some Debate who was most in Fault for the Injury done to him, he lays a strict Charge upon them not to fall out by the Way.

Joseph having dismissed his Brethren, they make the best of their Way to *Canaan*, where they were joyfully received by their good old Father, especially upon the Return of his two Sons, *Simeon* and *Benjamin*, whom he scarce expected to see again. But when they acquainted him with *Joseph's* being alive, and the Grandeur he lived in, his former Grief revived, and in his Judgment distrusting the extravagant Account they gave, he had like to have died: But when he saw the Carriages with the Presents and Provisions *Joseph* had sent for him, his fainting Spirits, like an Oil-spent Lamp opportunely supplied, revived, and in an Ecstasy of Joy he cried out, "This is beyond my Expectation: My Son *Joseph* yet alive! I will go and see him before I die." Accordingly he took his Journey with all that he had; and stopping at ^t *Beersheba*, he offered Sacrifice to the God of his Father *Isaac*. Here it was God spake to *Israel* in the Visions of the Night, bidding him fear not to go down into ^t *Egypt*, for he would there make of him a great Nation; that he would go with him, and surely ^u bring him

^v *Beersheba*. Here it was, where the Lord appeared to his Father *Isaac*, and blessed him, and where his Father built an Altar, and worshipped the Lord, *Gen.* xxvi. 23, 24, 25. But by *Jacob's* offering Sacrifice here, it may reasonably be supposed that so religious a Man as he was, not only gave God Thanks for the Preservation of his Son *Joseph*, and safe Return of his other Sons, but implor'd

the divine Protection and Blessing upon him and his in the Journey he had now undertaken.

^t *Egypt*. Though God had promised the Land of *Canaan* to *Israel's* Posterity, yet he persuades him to go into *Egypt*, (tho' a Country where his Ancestors had been ill treated,) for he would protect him.

^u *Bring, &c.* That is, not that he should live to come out of *Egypt*, but that

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him thence again, and that his beloved *Joseph* should there w close his Eyes. *Jacob* encouraged by this Divine Promise left *Beersheba*, and cheerfully pursues his Journey towards *Egypt*; his Sons carrying with them their Little-ones and their Wives in the Waggon which *Pharaoh* had sent to convey them. They took also with them their Cattle, and their Goods, which they had gotten in *Canaan*, and came into *Egypt*, *Jacob*, his Sons and his Sons Sons, his * Daughters, and his Sons Daughters, making in all y seventy Persons.

his Body should be carried from thence to be buried in the Sepulchre of his Ancestors, and that his Posterity should possess the promised Land, from which he was departed. For as to *Israel's* dying in *Egypt*, it's plain, that God at the Time of this Vision told him he should die there, *Gen. xli. 4.* for there *Joseph* is promised to close his Eyes,

w Close. From hence *Jacob* might justly infer that he should die a natural Death, and that his Son *Joseph* should be with him to the last Moment of his Life; which was a great Comfort to the fond old Patriarch.

* Daughters. This will admit of a twofold Meaning: First, As it was a general Way of speaking, such as *Sarah* used when she said, *Who should have said to Abraham that Sarah should have given Suck to Children?* *Gen. xxi. 7.* whereas she never gave Suck but to one Child, *Isaac*. Secondly, Though *Jacob* strictly had but one Daughter, which was *Dinah*, yet here he may be understood to speak of his Daughters-in-Law.

y The Names of *Jacob's* Family, which he brought with him into *Egypt*, are particularly expressed in *Gen. xli. 8.* to 25. And both here and in *Dent. x. 22.* are computed to be in the whole Number Threescore and ten Persons. But because there is an apparent Difference between the Account here, and that which is given by *St. Stephen, Acts vii. 14.* the one reckoning seventy, the other making it seventy five, it may not be unpleasant to reconcile these two different Accounts from the Opinion of a certain Learned Man. This Difficulty, says he, will be small, if we say, that the places are not parallel: For *Moses* makes a Catalogue, in which, together with *Jacob*, his own Offspring only, they

that came of his Loins, are comprehended, his Sons Wives being expressly excepted, v. 26. For which Reason not only they who actually went into *Egypt* with him, but *Joseph* also, with his two Sons *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, although they were in *Egypt* before, are contained in the Number Seventy; because they having sprung from *Jacob's* Loins, and taking their Original from the Land of *Canaan*, did live as Strangers in the Land of *Egypt*, and therefore were justly to be reckoned as if they had entered *Egypt* with *Jacob*. A special Reason there is also, why *Hexron* and *Hamul*, the two Grandsons of *Judah* by *Phares*, are put into that Number, tho' they were born afterwards in *Egypt*, that they might supply the Place of *Judah's* two Sons, *Er* and *Onan*, who were dead before. But *St. Stephen* in his Oration doth not set forth *Jacob's* Genealogy; but declares who they were that *Joseph* called out of the Land of *Canaan* into *Egypt*: For he called more than sprang from *Jacob's* Loins. There, in the first Place, are to be shut out *Judah's* two Grandsons *Hexron* and *Hamul*, and the next Place *Joseph* and his two Sons: *Judah's* two Grandsons he could not call, because they were not yet born: Himself and his Sons he could not call, because they were in *Egypt* already. Those five therefore, and then *Jacob*, whom *St. Stephen* mentions by himself, being set aside, there remain of *Moses's* Number Seventy but Sixty four, viz. the eleven Brethren, one Sister, *Dinah*, and two and fifty Children of the Brethren; to which add the eleven Wives of the eleven Brethren, whom *Joseph* must needs call together with their Husbands, and which belonged to the Kindred, you have all his Kindred in threescore and fifteen Souls.

Jacob being arrived on the Borders of *Egypt*, dispatches his Son *Judah* before him, to receive Directions for going to *Goshen*; who soon returns to his Father, and conducts him thither; where *Joseph* with a Train becoming his high Station meets him, and with infinite Satisfaction congratulates his happy Arrival in a Place where he had Power to make the rest of his Life easy and comfortable. Here were the highest Ecstasies of Filial Duty and Parental Affection expressed: Tears of Joy flowed from both Sides; and whilst *Joseph* was contemplating the Divine Goodness that he had restored him once more to the Sight of his aged Father, the pious Patriarch thinking his Joy on Earth compleat, desired to live no longer, "Now, says he, let me die, since I have seen thy Face.

After these mutual Indearments were somewhat over, *Joseph* proposes to his Father and Brethren that he would go and acquaint the King with their Arrival, which he was in Gratitude obliged to do, since the King had sent for them, instructing them at the same Time, that he would acquaint him with their Manner of Life, which was in breeding and nourishing Cattle, that if he should inquire of them what Occupation they were bred to, they should answer accordingly; by which they would secure the Land of *Goshen* for their Use, where they might live and take Care of their Flocks and Herds by themselves; for the *Egyptians* did so abominate Shepherds, that they would never suffer them to live promiscuously amongst them.

Then *Joseph* taking five of the most graceful Persons of his Brethren, went and acquainted *Pharaoh* that his Father and Family were arrived in *Goshen*, and presented the five he had brought with him to the King, who treated them respectfully for *Joseph's* Sake; and demanding what they were bred to, they, according to their Instructions answer'd, That they were Shepherds, and humbly begged Leave to settle in *Goshen*. The King turning to *Joseph* told him, "The whole

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" whole Land is at thy Disposal, place them in the best
 " Part of it, in *Goshen* if they like that best; and if
 " there be any among them of extraordinary Skill
 " in their Way, let them have the Care and Manage-
 " ment of my Cattle.

Joseph's Project thus happily succeeding, he introduces his Father to the King, whom *Jacob* reverently salutes. The King graciously condescending to talk with him, inquires his Age; who tells him he was an hundred and thirty Years old, though his Ancestors had lived to a greater Age. Then taking Leave of *Pharoah*, *Joseph* placed his Father and his Brethren in *Ramases*, a City afterwards of *Goshen*, which was the most fertile Part of *Egypt*, where he nourish'd them, and provided for them according to their Families with that Care and Tenderneſs, as if they had been his Children.

Good old *Israel* and his Family being thus happily disposed, *Joseph* returns to his Charge. And now the Famine increaſing, People from all Parts of *Egypt* and *Canaan* repair to *Joseph*, who furnished them with Proviſions as long as their Money held out; by which Means he had collected all the Money in the Land, and brought it into the King's Exchequer: And when their Money fail'd they brought their Cattle, and he gave them Bread in Exchange for them. Thus they went on till the ² ſixth Year, and then the Famine preſſed them ſo hard, that they were forced to lay their Condition before him, telling him that their Money was ſpent, and he having got their Cattle already, they had now nothing left to offer him but their Bodies and Lands, which they beſought him in Pity to accept, or elſe they muſt periſh. *Joseph* took them at their Word, and in the King's Name, and for his Uſe, bought all the Land of *Egypt*, except the Land of the Priests, who having an Allowance from the King, were not compell'd to part with

² *Sixth*. This generally is translated the ſecond Year; but it muſt not be underſtood to be the ſecond Year of the ſeven Years of Famine, but the ſecond from the

Time that their Money failed, which was indeed the ſixth of the ſeven, *Gen. xlviii. 2, 18.*

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their Possessions: But the rest of the *Egyptians* sold their Estates; and thus the Land became intirely the King's. Then *Joseph* repeating the Condition of the Bargain tells them. "Behold, I have this Day bought both you and your Land for *Pharaoh*: Now here is Seed for you, and ye shall ^a sow the Land. But upon these Terms shall ye hold your Land: Ye shall every Year give the fifth Part of your Increase to *Pharaoh*, and the other four Parts shall be your own for Seed, and for Food for your selves and Families.

Thus *Joseph* settled it a standing-Law all over *Egypt*, that *Pharaoh* should have the fifth Part of the yearly Increase of the Lands, except the Lands of the Priests. As for the common People, *Joseph* ^b removed them from the Places of their constant Abode to a greater Distance, whereby they in Time knew not where to claim. Thus the *Egyptians* saved their Lives at the Loss of their Estates and Liberties, and of Freemen became Bondmen; in which Condition they yet rejoiced, and gratefully acknowledged *Joseph*'s Care, calling him their Preserver: And to shew how willingly they submitted to these Terms, which the Sons of Liberty and Property would inveigh against as insupportable, to assure their Prince, notwithstanding this, of their Duty and Loyalty, they unanimously cry out to *Joseph*, "Let us find Favour in thy Sight [that those Conditions may be ratified,] and we will be the King's Servants.

The seven Years of Famine were succeeded by plentiful and seasonable Years, the Earth resuming its former Fertility, and the whole Land abounding in all the usual Productions of Nature. Twelve of these Years of Plenty *Jacob* lived to see; at the End of which Nature's Lamp grew dim, and near extinguish'd in him:

^a Sow. This being the last Year of the seven barren Years, they might sow in Hopes of Plenty again.

^b Removed. This *Joseph* probably did, with Intent that by so displacing and unsettling them from their ancient Seats and Demesns, and shifing them to and fro

one upon another's Land, but leaving none upon their own, he might the better confirm *Pharaoh*'s Title to the whole. Besides, this changing of Habitations shewed that they had nothing of their own, but received all of the King's Bounty.

His decayed Spirits warn him of approaching Fate, and each drooping Faculty beats an Alarm to Death. He therefore sends to his Son *Joseph*, and obliges him by an Oath to bury him in the Sepulchre of his Fathers, which *Joseph* swears to do: Upon this *Jacob* bowed himself to God, who, besides all his other Mercies, had given him a fresh Assurance by *Joseph's* Promise and Oath that he should be carried out of *Egypt* into the promised Land.

Joseph leaving his Father intirely satisfied in the Assurance he had given him, returns home; but is soon recall'd by the sad Message of his Sickneſs: Whereupon he took his two Sons *Manasseh* and *Ephraim*, and went to visit him. The feeble Patriarch summoneth all his Spirits, and exerts them so far as to sit up in his Bed to receive his favourite Son. And when *Joseph* came near him, he recounted to him the Promise which God had made to him of the Land of *Canaan*: "God Almighty," said he, appeared to me at *Luz* in the Land of *Canaan*, "and blessed me, and said unto me, Behold I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and will make of thee a Multitude of People, and will give this Land to thy Seed for an everlasting Possession." Then taking *Joseph's* two Sons into a peculiar Participation of this Promise, he adopted them as his own immediate Offspring; As *Reuben* and *Simeon*, says he, they shall be mine, [so as to become each of them Head of a distinct Tribe in *Israel*, and to enjoy the Privilege of Primogeniture in Right of their Father *Joseph*, to whom the Birth-right was transferred from *Reuben*, because of his incestuous Transgression against his Father:] But as for the Issue thou shalt beget after them, they shall be thine, and shall be called by the Name of their Brethren in their Inheritance. And going on, he gave *Joseph* a short Account of the Death and Burial of *Rachel* his Mother.

^c Recounted. Perhaps *Joseph* might not know of this before, he having been separated from his Father's Family when he was but a Boy.

All this while that *Jacob* was talking with *Joseph* concerning himself and his Sons, he had not taken Notice that *Joseph's* Sons were with him, but spoke of them as if they had been absent; but turning to *Joseph*, and seeing somebody with him, though he could not well discern who they were, (for his Eyes being dim with Age, and the Children standing between their Father's Knees, he could not distinguish them,) he asked, Who are these? *Joseph* as piously as directly answers, They are my Sons, whom God hath given me in this Place. Then *Jacob* bids him bring them near him that he might bless them: And kissing and imbracing them said to *Joseph* in a Transport of Joy, "I was out of Hopes of ever seeing thy Face again, and now God hath doubled that Blessing; for he hath suffered me to live to see thee and thy Children.

Joseph placing the Children according to the Order of their Birth, had set *Manasseh* so as to receive the Blessing of his Father's Right-Hand, and *Ephraim* that of his Left, guiding his Hand at the same Time: But *Israel* stretching out his Right-Hand laid it upon the Head of *Ephraim*, who was the younger, and his Left upon *Manasseh's* Head; and he blessed *Joseph* in blessing his Children, saying, "God, before whom my Father's *Abraham* and *Isaac* did walk, the God which fed me all my Life-time to this Day, and the^d Angel which redeemed me from all Evils, bless the Lads: And let my Name be named on them and the Name of my Fathers; and let them grow into a Multitude in the Midst of the Earth." *Joseph* was uneasy that his Father laid his Right-Hand (which carried with it the Preference) on the Head of the youngest; and supposing it had been done through Inadvertency; he held up his Father's Hand to remove it from *Ephraim's* to *Manasseh's* Head, saying, "Not so, my Father; for this is the First-born, therefore put thy Right-Hand up-

^d Angel. That is, Christ, who is called the Angel or Messenger of the Covenant, *Mal. iii. 1.*

^e Name. That is, let them be reckoned into our Family, equally with the rest of my Sons.

GENESIS CHAP. XLVIII.
Jacob bleffes Ephraim and Manaffes.

23



GENESIS 48. Verse 20.

And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim, & as Manasseh, and he set etc.

126.



Book I.

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“ on his Head. But *Israel*, actuated by divine Direction, refused, saying, “ I know it, my Son, I know it : He also shall become a People, and shall be great ; but truly his younger Brother shall be greater than he, and his Posterity shall become a Multitude.” Then adding to his former Blessing, he said, “ ^f In thee shall *Israel* bless, saying, God make thee as *Ephraim*, and as *Manasseh*.” Still setting *Ephraim* before *Manasseh*. Then finding himself grow weaker, he said to *Joseph*, “ I am now near my End ; but though I leave you, God shall be with you, and bring you again into the Land of your Fathers : And as for thee, my dear *Joseph*, as a distinguishing Mark of my Love, I have given thee one Portion above thy Brethren, which I took out of the Hand of the *Amorite* with my Bow and with my Sword.

The Conversation hitherto was private, between *Jacob* and *Joseph* only : But finding his End very near he called for all his Sons together, that while he had Strength to deliver his Mind, he might take his Farewel of them ; and not only distribute his Blessings among them, but foretel what should befall them and their Posterity in after-times. Then directing his Speech to them severally, he begins thus to the Eldest.

^f In thee, &c. That is when any of the People of *Israel* shall bless their Children, they shall say, *Be thou multiplied as Ephraim and Manasseh are multiplied*. From whence it was the Custom in *Israel*, that Children should be brought to Men eminent for Piety, that they might bless them, and pray over them : Thus they brought little Children to *Jesus*. But when a Blessing was given by Imposition of Hands, if it was to a Son, he that blessed said, *God make thee as Ephraim and Manasseh* ; if it was a Daughter, *God make thee as Sarah and Rebecca*.

^g Portion. Since *Jacob* was so peaceable a Man, that he never, as we read of, engag'd in any Martial Enterprize, it may be inquir'd, How and when he took this Portion of Land, which he here gave to *Joseph*, from the *Amorite* with his Sword and Bow, or by Force of

Arms ? Some refer it to that A& of *Simcon* and *Levi*, in destroying the Inhabitants of *Shechem*, *Gen. xxxiv*. But that cannot be : For, First, *Jacob* disavowed that A&, and blamed them for it both then and now, *Gen. xlv. 5, 6, 7*. Secondly, Those People of *Shechem*, whom they slew, were not *Amorites*, but *Hivites*, descended from *Hivi*, the sixth Son of *Canaan*, *Gen. x. 17*. whereas the *Amorites* came from the fourth Son of *Canaan*, *v. 16*. Others take these Words of *Jacob* to be spoken in a prophetick Sense ; foretelling what he in his Posterity should do : And through Assurance of Faith looking upon it as done, undertook to dispose of a double Portion (appendant to the Birth-right of *Joseph* on whom he had conferred the Birth-right) to be possessed by his Posterity.

Reuben,

Reuben, thou art my First-born, the Prince of my Strength, and by Right of Primogeniture wert born to many Privileges and Prerogatives, in Superiority over thy Brethren, and in Power from the double Inheritance annex'd in Course to the Birth-right: But these thou hast forfeited by defiling thy Father's ^h Bed.

ⁱ *Simeon* in course is next; but he is join'd with *Levi*, for that wicked Combination between them, in the Massacre of *Hamor* and his People. Of these therefore *Jacob* says that they were Brethren in Iniquity: Instruments of Cruelty were in their Habitations: O my Soul come not into their Secrets; let not my Honour be united to their Assemblies; for in their Anger they slew a ^k Man, and in their cruel Rage they ^l digged down a Wall: Cursed be their Anger, for it was fierce; and their Wrath, for it was cruel. Thus did *Jacob* set forth their Offence in very aggravating Circumstances, to which he pronounces a Sentence proportionate, I will ^m divide them in *Jacob*, and scatter them in *Israel*.

Jacob, having treated his Three eldest Sons with some Severity, softens his Style, when he comes to ⁿ *Judab*; whose

^h *Bed*. When *Jacob* heard that *Reuben* had laid with *Bilhah*, his Concubinary Wife, *Gen. xxxv. 22.* the Text says that he took no farther Notice of it then; but now at his Death he reproaches him severely with it, and gives it as the Reason for which he deprived him of the Privileges of Primogeniture.

ⁱ *Simeon*. *Reuben* having forfeited his Right of Primogeniture, it might be expected, that it should have devolv'd upon *Simeon*, who was next: But for his Cruelty to *Joseph*, and the Idolatry of his Tribe in worshipping *Baal-peor*, *Numb. xxv.* the Priesthood, which was the nobler Dignity of the Primogeniture, was transferr'd to *Levi*, the Third Son; and the Kingdom, the other Part of the Primogeniture, to *Judab*.

^k *Man*. This is by the Figure *Synechdoche* put for all the Inhabitants of *Shechem*.

^l *Digged, &c.* Meaning the Destroying and Spoiling the City.

^m *Divide*. This dividing may be applied to *Simeon*, whose Tribe had not a distinct Lot assigned them in *Canaan*, as the other Tribes had; but they were thrust within the Lot of *Judab*, *Josh. xix. 1.* until in the Time of *Hezekiah* King of *Judab*, a Party of them smote the Remainder of *Amalek*, and seizing themselves in their Possessions, *1 Chron. iv. 24.* were thereby divided from the rest of their own Tribe. As for the Tribe of *Levi*, it was scattered through all the Tribes; having no peculiar Lot or Share of the Land as the other Tribes had.

ⁿ *Judab*. His Mother *Leah*, *Gen. xxix. 35.* at his Birth gave him that Name in Gratitude and Thankfulness to God. But now his Father calls him so for another Reason, alluding to the Praise his Brethren should give him; and that for many Reasons; *vix. 1.* The Tribe of *Judab* was the First that entered the *Red-sea* after *Moses. 2.* After the Death of *Joshua*, the Tribe of *Judab* was pitch'd upon to be

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whose Name signifying Praise, it led him to a high Encomium of him. *Judab* (said he) thou art he whom thy Brethren shall praise for thy Strength and Courage. Thou shalt put thy Enemies to Flight; thou shalt pursue them, lay hold of them, and destroy them; thy Father's Children shall bow down before thee. And then wrapp'd up in the Contemplation of *Judab's* Strength and Glory, he breaks forth into these elegant Allegories; *Judab* is like a *Lion's Whelp*. From the Prey my Son thou art gone up. He stooped down, he couched as a Lion, and as an old Lion, who shall dare to rouse him? Then describing the Duration of his Government; The Scepter (said he) shall not depart from *Judab*, nor a Law-giver be wanting of his Issue, till the *Messiah* come; and unto him shall the gathering of the People be. Then pursuing his Allegories, to set forth the Prosperity and Plenty of *Judab's* Tribe, and the abundant Fruitfulness of its Soil, he added, Binding his Fole unto the Vine, and his Ass's Colt unto the choice Vine, he washed his Garments in Wine, and his Clothes in the Blood of Grapes. Signifying that Wine should with them be as plentiful as Water.

Jacob keeping still in *Leah's* Line passes by *Issachar* and takes *Zebulun*; whose Name signifying Dwelling, he only says of him, that he shall dwell at the Haven

be Commander in Chief of all the other Tribes, in their Wars, *Judg.* i. 3. From this Tribe sprang the mighty and powerful King *David*, his Son King *Solomon*, and several other Kings till the *Babylonish* Captivity. 4. This Tribe waged War against the *Ishmaelites*, *Idumeans*, *Moabites*, *Arabians*, and other neighbouring Nations. 5. From this Tribe descended *Zorobabel*, that commanded the People in their return from *Babylon*. 6. And lastly, from this Tribe sprang Christ.

* Bow down. By this, tho' the Birth-right was transferr'd from *Reuben* to *Joseph*, *1 Chron.* v. 1. with respect to the

double Portion: Yet that Part of the Prerogative of Primogeniture, which concerned Authority or Government over the rest, is plainly conferred on *Judab*; and so it is explained here, *1 Chron.* v. 2. For *Judab* prevailed above his Brethren, and of him came the chief Ruler, tho' the Birth-right was *Joseph's*, with respect to the Inheritance.

* *Lion's Whelp*. Here are gradually described by the *Lion's* Age, the Three Degrees of the State of this Tribe of *Judab*. The first, its Infancy under *Joshua*. The Second, its virile State under *David*. The Third, its confirm'd State under *Solomon*.

of the Sea; and that he shall be an Haven for Ships, and his Border shall be unto ^a *Zidon*.

Coming next to *Iffachar*, he compares him to a strong Ass couching down between two Burdens; seated in a pleasant and fertile Country; but being naturally slothful and pusillanimous, lov'd an inglorious Ease more than active Liberty and Bravery.

The good old Patriarch having gone thro' with *Leah's* Offspring, he takes the Handmaids Sons next, beginning with *Dan* Son of *Bilhab*, *Rachel's* Handmaid. *Dan* signifying Judging, he said, *Dan* shall ^r judge his People, as one of the Tribes of *Israel*; that is, tho' it was smaller, yet it should bear as much Authority as another. That it should be like a ^r Snake on the Way, or an Adder in the Path, which bites the Horses Heels, and makes them throw their Riders. Here *Jacob* cry'd out, ^r I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.

When he spake of *Gad*, alluding also to his Name, he said, A Troop shall overcome him: But he shall overcome at last. By which he is thought to have referred to what was afterwards perform'd by *Jephthah*, who was of this ^u Tribe.

Of happy *Asher* he foretells, his Bread shall be rich, and Kings should reckon it a Dainty; which denoted the exuberant Richness of the Soil.

^a *Zidon*. Accordingly this Lot came forth, *Jesh. xix. 11*.

^r *Judge*. This was fulfilled in *Samson*; yet was no more than *Iffachar* did by *Tola*, *Judg. x. 1*. But it is supposed, the Reason why this was said of *Dan*, was to shew that the Sons of the Handmaids (of which *Dan* is the first named) tho' as born of Bond-women, they were in that Respect inferior to the rest of their Brethren, should notwithstanding obtain some Share in the Government.

^r *Snake*. This seems to intimate that the *Danites* should prevail more by Policy and Stratagem, than by open Force: Which *Samson's* dealing with the *Philistines*, *Judg. xiv. and xv. Ch.* and the

Danites taking *Laiish*, *Ch. xviii.* confirms.

^r *I have*. Modern Interpreters are very ridiculously fanciful in the Application of this Text, distorting it to the most extravagant and contrary Meanings. There being no Context to make it out, it looks more like a commendatory Epanatholism on the Death-bed. But if we suppose something more than ordinary impress the Patriarch's Spirit at this Time, might he not have some Sense or Foresight of the Mischief the *Danites* afterwards brought upon themselves, when having rifled *Micha's* House, and robb'd him of his Gods, they fell into open Idolatry? *Judg. xviii.*

^u *Tribe*. See *Judg. xi.*

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* *Naphtali* (says he) shall be like a Tree having Grafts, shooting out pleasant Branches in its Generation.

And now he comes to his beloved *Joseph*, on whom he expatiates very largely, thinking he cannot say enough of him. *Joseph* (lays he) is like a fruitful Bough of a Tree planted near a Spring, whose * Branches run over the Wall. And having thus set forth his future Greatness in his Posterity, he looks back and recollects his past Troubles. The † Archers (said he) have sorely

* *Naphtali*. The Versions do generally confound the Animals that the Scripture speaks of, or transforms them into other Things, and sometimes Trees or Plants into Animals. Thus here in *Gen. xlix. 21.* they make *Jacob*, prophesying of the Tribe of *Naphtali*, say, *Naphtali is a Hind let loose, he giveth goodly Words.* Interpreters differ in nothing so much as this, even those that are for it, confounding their own Opinion; for they would seem to justify it by applying to *Barak*, and cite the Song upon the Victory over *Sisera* in Defence of it, which is very wide from the Purpose, that Song being compos'd by the Prophetess *Deborah*. Besides, as to the Gift of Eloquence, which they suppose given to this Tribe, we do not find it any where recorded, that *Naphtali* or his Posterity have been more eloquent than the other Tribes, nor that there was ever any School or famous City, or any Prophet of that Tribe; not to mention, that the *Galileans*, whose Country was made a Part of that Tribe, who were so clownish and unpolish'd, that those of *Jerusalem* could not indure their *Gibberish*. There are many Fables produc'd to justify this Version; But since neither *Moses*, nor any of the Prophets have spoken of this, it falls of it self; which made the learned *Bochart* translate the Words of the Original thus, *Naphtali shall be like a Tree having Grafts shooting out pleasant Branches.* This seems to be most rational and natural, not only from the Words, but from the Sense; if we consider, that *Jacob* compares this Tribe to a Tree, as he does that of *Joseph* in the following Verse; and as good Men are often compared to fine Trees, *Pf. i. 3.* and *xcii. 12.* either because of their Fruitfulness, (*Naphtali* having brought but Four Children to

Egypt, *Gen. xlv. 24.* which in less than 215 Years produced more than Fifty Thousand, *Nam. i. 42.*) or upon the Account of the Fruitfulness of the Country which fell to their Lot, which *Moses* and *Josephus* represent as the Richest of all *Judea*. And it is thus that the *Septuagint*, the *Chaldee Paraphrase*, and the *Arabick Version* which *Bochart* consulted in *Sweden*, do translate the Words, without following the Pointing of the *Masorets*; which has often corrupted the Meaning of the Text, and has given Occasion to modern Interpreters to translate this Verse after a Manner which makes the second Part of this Oracle to have no relation to the First, and supposes the Hinds were let loose after they were taken, contrary to the Custom of Hunters.

* Branches. By this rhetorical Amplification *Jacob* sets forth the Strength of *Joseph's* Family, and the large Extent of his twofold Tribe, *Ephraim* and *Manasseh*, which at the first numbering of the Tribes yielded of Men able to go forth to War Threescore and twelve thousand and seven hundred Men, (*Numb. i.*) And at the second Numbering, Four-score and five thousand and two hundred, (*Numb. xxvi.*) far exceeding any other Tribe.

† Archers. Amongst these Archers, his Brethren may undoubtedly claim the first Place: For they are expressly said to have hated him, *Gen. xxxvii. 4.* and to have increased their Hatred to him, *v. 5, 8.* to have conspired his Death, *v. 18.* and afterwards to have sold him, *v. 28.* Next to them his lewd Mistress, and, by her Means, his jealous Master *Potiphar*, may be reckoned amongst those Archers that sorely grieved him.

grieved him, and shot at him and hated him: But his Bow abode strong, and his Hands and Arms were made strong by the Hands of the mighty God of *Jacob*: From thence is the Shepherd, the ^a Stone of *Israel*: To which thou wert advanced by the God of thy Father, who shall help thee, and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with the ^a Blessing of Heaven above, Blessings of the Deep that lieth under, Blessings of the Breasts, and of the Womb. Then adding, The Blessings of thy Father have prevailed above the Blessings of my Progenitors, unto the utmost Bounds of the ^b everlasting Hills: And then to centre them all in *Joseph*, he says, They shall be on the Head of *Joseph*, and on the Crown of him that was separated from his Brethren.

Jacob concludes with *Benjamin* his youngest Son, of whom he said, *Benjamin* shall be ravenous as a Wolf: In the Morning he shall devour the Prey, and at Night he shall divide the Spoil. In which Words he as aptly as briefly foretells the fierce and cruel Nature of that Tribe, exemplified, amongst other Instances, in that of the ^c *Levite's* Concubine.

The good old Patriarch, having delivered himself thus to his Sons, gives them his Blessing, not according to his own natural Affection or Inclination, but according to the divine Direction then given him; and

^a *Stone*. So the last *English* Translation has it, making the Shepherd and Stone synonymous. That of 1610. reads it, of whom was the Feeder appointed by the Stone of *Israel*; taking the Stone to be Christ, and the Shepherd or Feeder appointed by him to be *Joseph*. But *Tremellius* and *Junius* make *Joseph* to be both the Shepherd and the Stone, viz. of Refuge to *Israel*. There is an *Ellipsis*, or Defect in the Sentence; which Interpreters supply, as they think best. However it be taken, undoubtedly *Jacob* had a Regard to *Joseph's* constant resisting the Assaults of his Mistress, and patiently bearing the Severity of his Master, and likewise to his taking Care of

and feeding both *Israel* and the *Egyptians*, and others, as a Shepherd provides for his Flock.

^a *Blessings*. These were Terms comprehensive of all outward Blessings.

^b *Everlasting Hills*. Which is a Term of Duration commonly used in Scripture: But *Deut. xxxiii. 15.* seems to explain this Text more directly, where *Moses* repeating this very Blessing of *Jacob* on *Joseph*, does not seem so much to regard the Comparison of Hills in respect of Duration, as in Point of Blessing, which God more largely dispens'd in Hills and Mountains.

^c *Levite's, &c.* See *Judg. xix. 20, 21*

GENESIS CHAP.L.

Jacobs burial.

24



GENESIS 50.Verse 13.

His sons carried him into the land of Canaan, and buried him in the cave of the field of Machpelah. etc

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putting them in Mind of his Death, says, I am going to be gathered to my People, I charge you bury me with my Fathers in the Cave that is in the Field of *Ephron* the *Hittite*; which that they might not mistake, he further describes thus; In the Cave that is in the Field of *Machpelah*, which is before *Mamre* in the Land of *Canaan*, which *Abraham* bought with the Field of *Ephron* the *Hittite*; for a Possession of a Burying-place. And to ingage them the more to perform his Will in this, he tells them, There *Abraham* and *Sarah* his Wife was buried; there *Isaac* and ^d *Rebecca* his Wife were buried; and there I buried *Leah*. And to assure them of their Right to that Burying-place, he tells them further, That the Field and the Cave therein were purchased not only of *Ephron*, but of the Children of *Heth*. Having thus given his last Charge to his Sons concerning his Funeral, he ^e laid his Feet on the Bed and quietly expired.

The Loss of so good a Father must undoubtedly be very afflicting to so numerous a Family, whose chief Support depended on the Piety of him; yet we find none of *Jacob's* Sons that paid the least Demonstrations of filial Affection and Duty with so much Devotion as the pious *Joseph*. He could not see his aged Parent's Face, tho' dead, without kissing, and bathing it with his Tears. And having thus given vent to his Passion, he commanded his Servants the Physicians to ^f imbalm him, which accordingly they did. And when the usual Time of Mourning was over, *Joseph* intreated some of *Pharaoh's* Courtiers (for as he was a Mourner, it was not proper for him to ap-

^d *Rebecca*. This is the first Mention of *Rebecca* and *Leah*, with respect to their Death and Burial.

^e *Laid*. Whilst *Jacob* was prophesying and blessing his Sons, he sat on the Bed, his Feet hanging down; but when he had done talking to them and taken his Leave of them, he gather'd his Feet into the Bed and departed.

^f *Imbalm*. This being the first Mention we have in Story of *Imbalm*ing the Dead, may well countenance a Supposition, that the *Israelites* here learning it of the *Egyptians*, and practising it afterwards on great and solemn Occasions amongst themselves, as in *2 Chron.* xvi. 14. and *John* xix. 40. it might from them come into use among Christians.

pear in the Presence) to acquaint him, that his Father just before his Death had obliged him by an Oath, to bury him in the Sepulchre of their Family in the Land of *Canaan*; and therefore to beg Leave of the King for him to go and bury his Father, upon Promise to come again. The King readily consents, and *Joseph* sets forwards, attended not only with his own and his Father's Family, but with the chief Officers of the Household, and Nobility, who, to honour *Joseph* and grace the Funeral, would bear him Company, partaking in all the Solemnity performed to the Memory of his deceased Father.

After some Travel they came to the Threshing-floor of *Atad*, where they made a Halt; and *Joseph* made a solemn Mourning for his Father Seven Days together. The *Canaanites* who inhabited the Land, seeing the *Egyptians* mix themselves in these Obsequies, were amazed, and thinking they had the greatest Concern in this Funeral Lamentation, could not forbear saying, This is a grievous Mourning to the *Egyptians*: From whence the Name of that Place was called *Abel-Misraim*; that is, the Mourning of the *Egyptians*. This Solemnity being ended they went on; and being come to the Field of *Machpelah*, which *Abraham* had bought for a Burying-place, they buried *Jacob* in the Cave there: And having thus performed *Jacob's* Will, they all returned to *Egypt*.

So long as *Jacob* lived, *Joseph's* Brethren knew themselves secure; but now their Father was dead, their former Guilt return'd, and suggested to them the just Revenge *Joseph* might take of them for the former Miseries they had occasion'd to him. Wherefore they consulted together how to deprecate their Offence; which they soon agreed upon, and made their dead Father, whose Memory they knew was very dear to pious *Joseph*, their Advocate; and framing a Message in *Jacob's* Name, they sent it to their Brother in these Words. Thy Father commanded us
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 "cause they are the Servants of the God of thy Fa-
 "ther." This Message was artfully worded, for they,
 fearing that the supposed Request of their dying Fa-
 ther might not be prevailing enough now he was
 dead, make God their Intercessor. But there was
 no need of such moving Arguments to *Joseph's* com-
 passionate Temper: Their Diffidence of his good Na-
 ture is as afflicting now, as their Offence was former-
 ly to him. He wept at the Delivery of the Message;
 and sending for them, they falling down at his Feet
 in the most abject Manner, he tenderly dismisses their
 Fears, and comforts them: "Revenge, *says he*, be-
 "longs to God, and I forgive you. For tho' ye
 "design'd ill against me, yet God turned it to good,
 "making me thro' your Malice, an Instrument under
 "him to save much People alive, and you especially,
 "as now is evident. Therefore fear no Hurt from
 "me, for I will protect and cherish you and your
 "Families." Thus the pious *Joseph* dismissed his Bre-
 thren with the Assurance that they should always find
 in him an affectionate Brother and a constant Friend.

Joseph liv'd four and fifty Years after his Father's
 Death, having the Comfort of seeing himself the
 happy Parent of a numerous Offspring in his two Sons
Ephraim and *Manasseh* to the third Generation. And
 now finding himself near his End, he sent for his
 Brethren, and said thus to them: "My Death is
 "at Hand, but tho' I leave you, yet God will surely
 "remember you, and bring you out of this Land,
 "unto the Land, which he sware he would give to

8 *Brethren*. By Brethren, we are not
 to understand the other eleven Sons of
Jacob, who, except *Benjamin*, being all
 older than himself, might probably be
 all, or most of them dead; but it must

here be meant of the Heads of their Fa-
 milies: For in the Scripture Dialect all
 near Kinsmen go under the general Ap-
 pellation of Brethren, as *Abraham* called
Lot, *Gen. xiii, 8*, and *Ch. xxiv. 27*.

“ the Posterity of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*. I
“ charge you therefore, when God shall thus visit
“ you, and bring you out of this Land, that you
“ carry up my Bones with you.” This he obliged
them to by an Oath. And *Joseph*, being an Hun-
dred and ten Years old, died; and in order to per-
form their Oath, they imbalmed his Body, and kept
it in a Coffin till the Time of their Deliverance should
come,



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JOB CHAP. I.
Job's patience.

25



JOB 1. Verse 14.

*And there came a messenger unto
Job, and said, the oxen were plowing,
and the asses feeding beside them:*

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The Story of JOB:

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F I R S T B O O K.

MOSESES, intending to carry on the History of *Jacob* and his Family to the End of their Deliverance from the *Egyptian* Bondage without Interruption, lays by the Story of *Job*, which according to Series of Time should come in, in the Time of the *Israelites* Servitude, and before their Deliverance: For which Reason I chose rather to insert it here, than to place it so far out of its due Course of Time, as the Compilers of the Bible have done.

Various have been the Conjectures concerning *Job*; few agreeing in the same Opinion, who he was. Some will have him to be descended from *Nabor* the Son of *Terah* and Brother of *Abraham*: Others will have him

to

to be descended from *Eſau*, and to be *Jobab* his Great-Grandſon. But the moſt probable is theirs, who ſuppoſe him to have ſprung from *Abraham* by *Keturab*, his ſecond Wife. With this ſeveral Circumſtances concur: For *Job* is ſaid to be the greateſt and moſt conſiderable Man for Wealth of all the Inhabitants of the Eaſt, into which Country *Abraham* ſent his Sons by ^b *Keturab*. And amongſt the People of the Eaſt are reckoned the ⁱ *Midianites*, deſcended from *Midian*, one of *Abraham*'s Sons by ^k *Keturab*.

Taking it for granted that this Story is ^l real, we will proceed to conſider the Time when he lived. That *Job* lived before the Law, may be gathered from his offering Burnt-offerings in the Land where he lived, which God accepted and commanded; which Offerings were ^m forbidden by the Law in any other Place, than that which the Lord ſhould chooſe in ſome one of the Tribes of *Israel*. And that he lived after *Jacob*, may be inferred from the Character given him by God, ⁿ That there was none like him in the Earth, for Uprightneſs and the Fear of God. Which large Encomium could not be allowed to any, while *Jacob* lived, who was God's Favourite-Servant, deſcended from the Father of the faithful *Abraham*, in a direct Line from *Iſaac*: Nor can it well be ſuppoſed, that ſo great a Commendation as that, could be given after *Jacob*, to any whiſt *Joſeph* lived, who in moral Virtues and other Excellencies made as bright a Figure as any in his Time.

^b *Keturab*. Gen. xxv. 6.

ⁱ *Midianites*. Judg. vi. 3.

^k *Keturab*. Gen. xxv. 2.

^l *Real*. From the Uncertainty who *Job* was, ſome have taken the Liberty to queſtion, Whether he was at all? Whether in Point of Fact, it be ſtrictly true, that there was ſuch a Man, named *Job*, who underwent thoſe Trials and Sufferings, which in this Book are recorded of him? Or whether it was only an inſtructive and parabolical Poem, deviſed and compoſed by ſome of the devout Ancients, on Purpoſe to inſtil into the Rea-

der thoſe excellent Principles delivered in it. But beſides other Arguments that might be urged to prove the Reality of the Story, drawn from the Names of Perſons, People, Countries, and ſome particular Paſſages therein mentioned, the Credit given to it by God thro' his Prophet *Ezekiel* Ch. xiv. 14. and his Apoſtle *St. James*, Ch. v. 11. in citing it, and referring to it, is enough, I think, to gain Belief with all, who have a due Regard for thoſe Writings, that it is a real Hiſtory.

^m *Forbidden*. Deut. xii. 13, 14.

ⁿ *That, &c.* See *Job* i. 8, and Ch. ii. 3.

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After these Conjectures, tho' the precise Time of *Job's* Birth cannot with sufficient Ground be ascertained: Yet there is a general Concurrence in Opinion, that he lived in the Time of *Israel's* Bondage in *Egypt*; some placing his ° Birth in the same Year, in which *Jacob* went down into *Egypt*; and to date the Beginning of his Trials in the Year that *Joseph* died, being the seventy first of *Job's* Life.

Nor are there less various Conjectures about the Time of writing this Story; some will have it written after *Moses's* Death; others think it written by *Moses* himself. It matters not who was the Compiler: 'Tis certain the whole Story, as it is, is an admirable Commentary on the first Book of the *Pentateuch*: And therefore no great Quantity of Historical Observations can be expected from it.

St. *Jerome* is unnecessarily curious in defining the Stile of it: It is sufficient, that in *Job* we have the Character of an excellent Person exhibited to us by God himself, adorned with all the Virtues that can render him acceptable to God, and desirable by Men; to both which he is elegantly and briefly described doing his Duty, ^p fearing God, and shunning Evil.

How considerable *Job* was in the World, may appear from the Vastness of his Stock, which consisted of Seven thousand Sheep, Three thousand Camels, Five hundred Yokes of Oxen, and five hundred she Asses.

Then for personal Blessings, God had been very liberal to him, for he had seven Sons and three Daughters; who inherited their Father's Name, more than his Virtues, being wholly given up to worldly Pleasures. For when they were grown up, and removed from him, they

° Birth. It might not probably be so liable to exception, if *Job's* Birth were set a little lower, as about the Time of *Jacob's* Death: And then *Joseph*, who survived his Father about Four and fifty Years, will have been dead about Sixteen Years, before that extraordinary Character was given of *Job*, in the Seventieth

Year of his Age. At which Time, for any Thing that appears, he might well be without Competitor or Equal. And there being somewhat more than Sixty Years between *Joseph's* Death, and *Moses's* Birth, the Story of *Job* may fitly enough fall within that Interval of Time.

^p Fearing. See *Job*, Ch. i. v. 1.

took

took their Turns to feast from House to House, every one his Day, and ^a invited their Sisters to feast with them. When they had gone their Round, pious *Job* considering with himself the Dangers that attend such Junkettings, and fearing lest his Children in their Merriments might have committed some Extravagancies, he kindly sent and exhorted them to purify themselves by Repentance and other Ceremonies, in order to prepare them to sacrifice to their offended God; the good Man himself rising up early in the Morning, and offering Burnt-offerings for them according to the Number of them all. And this he did from Time to Time after their ^r revelling Feasts. This Pious Care of *Job* endeared him to God, who expressed his high Esteem of the good Man at a Time when the ^s Sons of God came to present themselves ^t before the Lord; at which Time also Satan, the Adversary, came among them, to seek an Opportunity of doing Mischief. Then the Almighty, to set forth *Job* as an exemplary Pattern of Virtue and Righteousness, said to Satan; "Hast thou considered my Servant *Job*, that there is none like him in the Earth; a Man exactly good, and one that feareth God and shunneth Evil?" The malignant Adversary, unwilling to own that *Job* served God out of a religious Principle, but for Self-interest, reply'd: "Doth *Job* serve thee for nothing? Hast thou not inclos'd him on ^c all Sides, and secur'd him and all that he hath from the

^a *Invited.* *Job* i. 4.

^r *Revelling.* *Job* i. 5.

^s *Sons of God.* That is Good Angels; as on the contrary *Satan* is called the Angel of Death.

^t *Before the Lord.* Some will have this Convention of the Good Angels to be real, but at the same Time such as is agreeable to the Nature of Spirits; and that they met in a certain Place, and *Satan* with them, before the Angel, who in the Room of God, presided over that Assembly: But so, as *Satan* was seen of God and Angels; but he, by Reason of his Fall, not able to see God or them. Others take it to be parabolically spoken, that the Truth may be the better understood: For the Decrees

of God, the Ministry of his Angels, and the Machinations of the Wicked Angels, are often in Scripture express'd under the Form of the Judgments and Counsels of Kings; as we may see *1 Kings* xxii. 19. *Zach.* iii. 1. But be it how it will, it's certain these Things are not meant in a gross literal Sense, but as God is pleas'd to accommodate himself to our Understanding: For *Satan* can no other Way be said to come into the Presence of God, nor to talk with him, &c. nor the Angels (properly speaking) to come to God, since they are always in his Presence; nor can any Day be assigned to God, who is without Time, infinite, immense, &c.

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“ Reach of Misfortune and Danger? But withdraw thy
 “ Protection, and suffer him to be afflicted with the
 “ Loss of the mighty Wealth thou hast heap’d upon
 “ him, and he will curse thee to thy Face.” God knew
 the Integrity of *Job*, and that the Exercise of it might
 redound to his Honour, and turn to the good Example
 of others, he exposed *Job* to the Trial. “ Behold, says
 “ he, all that he hath is in thy Power; but dare not to
 “ touch his Person.” The malicious Fiend having ob-
 tain’d this Permission, soon sets his wicked Engines to
 work; and, to sour *Job*’s pious Temper into Blasphemy
 the more readily, attacks the good Man at once with
 a Crowd of Miseries, in all Probability too much for
 human Nature to bear.

Satan takes his Opportunity to begin his Assault upon
Job on the Day that his eldest Son was in Course to en-
 tertain his Relations. He had in Readiness stirr’d up the
 “ *Sabeans* to make an Inroad upon *Job* for Booty; which
 they did with such Fury, that but one Servant escap’d
 to bring the unhappy News to *Job*; “ Thy Oxen, said
 “ he, were plowing, and the Asses feeding by them,
 “ and the *Sabeans* fell upon them, and took them away;
 “ and they have put all thy Servants to the Sword, ex-
 “ cept my self.” *Job* had not Time to reflect with him-
 self whether this might be the Effect of common De-
 predation, or a Judgment upon him for the Folly of his
 Children; for this Messenger is immediately succeeded
 by another, who in a great Consternation tells him,
 “ The Fire of God is fallen from Heaven, and hath
 “ burnt up the Sheep and thy Servants, and consumed
 “ them all, and I only am escaped to tell thee.” This
 Account was very shocking, and the Calamity coming
 from Heaven might make it look like a more immediate
 Judgment than the Former; but before *Job* could ani-
 madvert upon it, a third Messenger rushes in upon him
 and tells him, “ The *Caldeans* in three Parties fell upon

* *Sabeans*. They were a neighbour- son of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, Gen. xiv. 3.
 ing People descended from *Sheba*, Grand-

“ the Camels, and have carried them away, and all thy
 “ Servants have they put to the Sword, but my self.”
 Thus was *Job* stript of all his Substance in one Day, and
 he that in the Morning was the richest Man in all the
 East, before Night was perhaps the poorest Man in the
 World. The malicious Devil finding these Attempts
 too remote to raise that Passion which he expected in *Job*
 upon this sudden Course of Misfortunes, to crown all,
 resolves to touch him in a more sensible Part, and to come
 as near him, as the Bound set him by the Almighty would
 permit. This Prince of the Air therefore raising a very
 great Storm threw down the House, where *Job*’s Chil-
 dren were then merry-making, upon their Heads, and
 slew them all. And that *Job* might not have any Time
 to digest the Grief of his former Losses, before the last
 Messenger had made an End of relating to him the Loss
 of his Camels, another comes in haste, and in a great
 Fright tells him, “ That as his Sons and Daughters were
 “ eating, and drinking Wine in their eldest Brother’s
 “ House, there came a great Wind from the Wilder-
 “ ness, and smote the ^w Four Corners of the House, and
 “ it fell upon the young ^x Men, and they are dead, and
 “ I only escap’d to tell thee.” This was a home Stroke
 indeed, and touch’d *Job* in a tender Part. The Death
 of his Children, all at one Blow, affected him deeply;

^w *Four Corners.* This hath been a
 mighty Subject of Jest and Ridicule among
 the Atheists who would fain argue a great
 Impropriety of Expression, and from
 hence invalidate this, and many such like
 Expressions in the Holy Scriptures. They
 ask, how in the Course of Nature the
 Wind could blow from any Four Points of
 the Compass at once? I will not answer
 them from the Extraordinariness of this
 Event, their Patron the Prince of the Air
 having at this Time an unlimited Power
 over the Elements to attack *Job* where he
 would, except in his Person, or how he
 pleas’d. But in Storms, especially such
 violent ones, as are even now-a-days usual,
 Navigators would be puzzled to say, whe-
 ther the Wind comes directly from one

Point of the Compass, or from several at
 one and the same Time. And therefore
 I shall refer them to an Heathen Author,
 whom they will sooner believe than re-
 veal’d Religion; and if I tell them that
Virgil is of this Opinion, I do not ques-
 tion but they will believe him. Let them
 consult *Virgil*’s Description of a Storm
 in his first *Aeneid*, and there they will
 find Three Winds attacking the Seas at
 once.

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 Africus* (Procellis

^x *Men.* From the Dignity of the Mal-
 culine Gender the Word *Men* here com-
 prehends both Sexes; so that *Job*’s Daugh-
 ters as well as his Sons were kill’d with
 the Fall of the House.

but

but the Circumstance and Manner of their Death was very afflicting, considering how unprepared Death found them.

These repeated Calamities did not betray *Job* to any Irregularity or Indecency; the only Vent he at first gave to his Grief was renting his Mantle, the common Token of Affliction and Sorrow in those Eastern Countries and early Ages of the World: Then deliberately following the other usual Customs of Mourning, he shaved his Head, and in humble Submission of Mind fell upon the Ground and worshipped. His Misery could not make him forget his Duty, and therefore he humbled himself under the Divine Hand, without whose Permission he well knew none of these Misfortunes could have befallen him.

The Devil's great Expectation was from this last Trial; he knew *Job* could with a serene Mind bear temporal Losses, which Time and Industry might repair, but this Wound of Nature in the Death of his Children, he thought would have transported him into some indecent and intemperate Expression against God. But to his great Disappointment *Job* stands the Shock, and in humble Acknowledgment of his own Meanness, cries, "Naked came I out of my Mother's Womb, and naked shall I return to the Earth, the common Womb and Mother of Mankind." And then in a quiet Resignation and Thankfulness for what he had received at the Hand of God, tho' now deprived of all, he gives up all for lost in this World, and says, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord." Thus the pious Patriarch's Virtue shin'd in his Sufferings, which, great as they were, could not make him deface the Character his Maker had given him by the least Murmur or Repining. He knew it was but just, that he, who gave, should have Power to resume his Grant when he pleas'd; and therefore instead of cursing, as Satan had maliciously suggested he would, he blessed God for all his Dispensations whatsoever, and proved the Devil a Liar.

But

But the restless Fury resolves not to leave him thus: For when the Sons of God^y presented themselves as before, the Lord propos'd *Job* again to Satan, who had crowded himself amongst them, as an Instance of a perfect and upright Man, that feared God and avoided Evil. Still, says God, he holds his Integrity, tho' thou mov'dst me against him to destroy him without Cause: His Piety appears in the Greatness of his Sufferings, and his Faith and Resignation are compleat. To which the old Deceiver wittily and maliciously reply'd, "Thou hast hitherto permitted me only to try him at a Distance, but let me touch his Person, and he will still blaspheme." The Almighty knew that these Exercises, though sharp to Nature, would redound to his Glory, and turn to *Job's* Advantage; therefore resolving in his divine Providence to arm *Job* with Patience to bear them, and in the End to recompence all his Sufferings with an extraordinary Reward, he enlarges Satan's Commission, but yet with a Limitation; behold, says he, he is in thy Power, but touch not his Life.

The busy Fiend over-joyed at the Inlargement of his Power, questions not in the least to make an easy Conquest over *Job's* Virtue; therefore he immediately falls upon him, whilst the Sense of his late Losses remains upon him, and afflicts him from Head to Foot with Boils and Ulcers. Never was human Nature more disguised than poor *Job's* Body in this loathsome Condition: His Skin studded with nasty Scabs and Blotches; not arising from any peccant Humour in his natural Constitution, which Medicines might correct, but inflicted by malicious Policy, which rais'd them to the highest Extremity of Pain, that, if possible, might make *Job* despair and blaspheme. Nor were his Pains short or intermitting, like Fits and Pangs, but lasting for a continued Series of Time; and that which increas'd his Misery was the Nastiness of his Distemper, which render'd him not only

^y *Presented*. This, as has been already said, is a Form or Manner of Speech, not strictly proper to God and Spirits, but metaphorically accommodated to the Weakness of Man's Capacity.

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^b *Curse*. F

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odious to himself, but loathsome to others: For not only his ^a Relations and Friends abandoned him, but his very menial Servants withdrew from him, leaving him destitute of all human Help. He, who but a few Hours before was the greatest Man in his Country, in whose Presence the ^a young Men were afraid to appear, and before whom the Aged stood up; to whom Princes paid the most awful Reverence, and Nobles in humble Silence admir'd; divested of all Grandeur sits mourning on a Bed of Ashes, and instead of Royal Apparel is cover'd with stinking Sores and Ulcers. He, who was but the other Day the Delight of Mankind, is now become the foulest of Objects; and a very Dunghil upon a Dunghil. All keep at a frightful Distance, and with Horror behold him as a most loathsom Monster. And to add, if it was possible, to the Misery of *Job*, the Wife of his Bosom, from whom, more than all the World, he might reasonably expect the most comfortable Assistance, instead of pitying him in this deplorable Condition, treats him with the utmost Scorn and Contempt, and reproaches him for his Virtue. "Dost thou still, *said she*, retain thine Integrity to a God that afflicts thee? ^b Curse him and die, that thou may'st be out of thy Pain.

Job

^a Relations. See *Job* xix. 13, 14, 15, 16.

^b Young Men. See *Job* xxix. 8. and *Ch.* ix. 10.

^c Curse. From the Ambiguity of the equivocal Word in the Hebrew, which signifies to *bless*, as well as to *curse*, great Disagreement hath arisen amongst Interpreters; and the Words have been variously render'd. They that make *Job's* Wife to bid him *curse God and die*, suppose *Job* to have lived after the Law was given (*Levit.* xxiv. 15, 16.) which made it Death to *curse God*; and that his Wife (an Arabian and Heathen) knew the Law and the Punishment for Blasphemy, and spake thus to him, not to reproach him, but in Pity to him, that he might be deliver'd from his Pains. But general Consent places *Job* before *Moses*, and God's accepting, and commending his Sacrifices, offered in the Land of *Uz*, prove that he liv'd before the Law, which made it pe-

nal for any Man to offer Sacrifice in any other Place, than before the Ark or Tabernacle: Nay the devout *Gentiles* came thither to worship; of which we have an Instance in the *Ethiopian Eunuch*, *Acts* viii. 27. But if *Job* had lived after this Law was given, yet it is unlikely, that his Wife should so soon have learn'd it, at such a Distance: Nor was it obliging to the *Gentiles*, unless to those that lived among and under the *Jewish Oeconomy*; neither was there any in the Land of *Uz*, who had Power to have executed such a Law on *Job*, had he curs'd, as these suppose she bad him. But, to make short this Part of the Argument, whatever may be conjectured about *Job's* living under the Law, it is certain that the Law is not mention'd in any Part of the Book of *Job*, either by himself or any of his Friends; tho' there was Occasion enough for taking Notice of it.

But after all other Conjectures, since

Job firmly stood this Shock of his Wife's Tongue; tho' it was so provoking as to let loose the Reins of his Temper, which he had hitherto restrain'd, and with some Warmth force him to rebuke her, saying, "Thou talkest like a weak Woman: Shall we rejoice in Prosperity, when it pleases God to bless us with it; and shall we not patiently bear Adversity, when he pleases to visit us?" Thus did the Almighty preserve and support *Job* under the Loss of his Estate and Children; under the Extremity of his Pains, the Desertion of his Friends and Relations, the Neglect of his Servants, and the Provocation of his Wife. All which Torments crowding one upon the Neck of another, could not betray *Job* to entertain the least offending Thought, or utter an indecent Word.

The Misfortunes and Afflictions that beset *Job* being so remarkable, soon spread about the neighbouring Countries, and from thence to more distant Regions; till at last they reach'd the Ears of his old Friends *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*, *Bildad* the *Shubite*, and *Zophar* the *Naamathite*, who no sooner heard of the sad Condition of their Friend *Job*, but they made an Appointment to go together and pay him a Visit, and comfort him. These three Persons being Men of ^e Figure and Condition, it must take up some Time to make the Appointment, and then to travel together to see *Job*; so that poor *Job* must continue a considerable Time in this painful

the Devil's Design was to make *Job* curse God, why may it not be supposed, that he instigated her to persuade her Husband to it; not with respect to any penal Law, (for that is ridiculous to imagine) but in expectation, that so open and bold a Blasphemy would provoke the divine Justice immediately to strike him dead, and thereby deliver him from his intollerable Miseries.

But however it was, it is certain by *Job*'s Answer, that she gave him no good Advice; otherwise so meek and good a Man, as he, would not have given her so sharp a Reproof; for if she had persuaded him to have blessed God, he would, no doubt, have been ruled by her; but it must

be some Malediction implied in the Word that mov'd *Job* to reply so angrily to his Wife.

^c *Temanite*. So called from *Teman*, Grandson to *Eisan* by his Son *Eliphaz*, Gen. xxxvi. 10, 11.

^d *Shubite*. Descended from *Shuah*, the youngest Son of *Abraham* by *Keturah*, Gen. xxv. 2.

^e *Zophar*. His Descent is not easily traced without straining, tho' some would derive him from *Eisan*.

^f *Figure*. The *Septuagint* call the first and last of these three Friends of *Job*, Kings; and the second, Tyrant; which is a Term equivalent to that of King.

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Condition before his Friends could come at him. When they were come within Sight of him, they found him so much alter'd, that they could not assure themselves who it was, so unlike himself was the poor disfigured *Job*. But when they came nearer and saw the miserable Condition he was in, they burst into Tears, and rending their Mantles they sprinkled ^g Dust upon their Heads towards Heaven, to express their Sorrow for him. And observing the extream Grief and Pain he labour'd under, they sat down upon the Ground by him Seven Days and Nights and spake not a Word to him; their own Sorrow suppressing their Speech, or their Sense of his Misery making them think it unreasonable to speak to him, till he began. At length *Job* brake Silence in cursing the Day of his Birth, wishing he had never been born, or that he had immediately died.

Job's three Friends having already conceived an ill Opinion of him from the unaccountable Greatness of his Affliction, which they concluded must be the Hand of God in Judgment upon him, and either for some deep Hypocrisy, or secret heinous Sin, fall thus severely upon him. And *Eliphaz* in ^h three Orations, *Bildad* in as ⁱ many, and *Zophar* in ^k two from common Topicks argue, that such Affliction as his could not come from any but God's Hand; and that it is not agreeable with the Justice of God to afflict without a Cause, or punish without Guilt. Then they charge *Job* with being a grievous Sinner, and great Hypocrite, endeavouring all they could to extort a Confession of Guilt from him. But *Job* immovable in his Sincerity to God, and Innocence to Man, confidently maintains his Virtue in responsory Speeches successively to every one of theirs, defends his Innocence, refutes their unkind Suggestions, and smartly reprehends their Injustice and Want of Charity; yet always observing a submissive Stile and Reverence, when

^g *Dust, &c.* By this Rite or Custom they signified the utmost Confusion, express'd by their mixing Air and Earth together.

^h *Three.* See *Job* iv. and v. xv. and xxii.

ⁱ *Many.* See *ibid.* Ch. viii. xviii. and xxix.

^k *Two.* See *ibid.* Ch. xi. and xx.

he spake of God; of whose secret End in permitting this Trial to come upon him being ignorant, he often importunately begg'd a Discharge from this Life, lest the Continuance of his Pains might drive him to Impatience.

During this Argument between *Job* and his three troublesome Friends, there was present one¹ *Elibu*, a young Man, who, having heard the Discourse on both Sides, was pleased with neither; for he thought *Job* insisted too much on his own Justification; and that they condemn'd him before they had convicted him: He therefore undertakes the Matter; and after a Prefatory^m Excuse for his interposing, who was a young Man in Comparison of them, and for the Plainness of Speech he intended to treat them in, attack'd *Job* in a longⁿ Oration; and reprehending him for insisting so much in his own Vindication, indeavoured to convince him, by Arguments drawn from God's unlimited Sovereignty and unsearchable Wisdom, that it is not inconsistent with his Justice to lay his afflicting Hand upon the best and most righteous of Men. And therefore that it is the Duty of all Men to bear such Exercises, when any befall them, without murmuring or complaining, and to acknowledge the Justice of God therein. *Job* heard all this with great Attention, but made no Reply; probably, lest he might be drawn to utter some unguarded Expression, which the inhuman Treatment of his three Friends might have extorted from him. Therefore when they were all silent, the Lord himself took up the Matter, and out of the Whirlwind directed his Speech to *Job*: Wherein, with the highest Amplifications describing his Omnipotence in the Formation and Disposition of the Works of the^o Creation, he so effectually convinced *Job* of his own Weakness and Inability of himself to understand the Ways and Designs of God, that *Job*, in the most profound Humility break-

¹ *Elibu*. He was descended from *Buz*, the Son of *Nahor*, *Abraham's* Brother, *Gen.* xxii. 21. and of the Kindred of *Ram*, or *Aram*, *Nahor's* Grandson, from whom the *Aramites* or *Syrians* came.

^m Excuse. See *Ch.* xxxii.

ⁿ Oration. Continued from *Ch.* xxxiii. to xxxvii.

^o Creation. See from *Ch.* xxxviii. to xli.

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ing forth, said; "Behold I am vile and contemptible in
 "Comparison of thee? What shall I answer thee? I
 "will lay my Hand upon my Mouth: Once have I
 "spoken, but I will not answer: Yea, twice, but I will
 "proceed no farther." Then *Job* proceeded to a more
 ample Confession of the Supremacy, Power and Wis-
 dom of God, to this Effect: "I know thou canst do every
 "Thing; and that no Thought can be hid from thee.
 "Well mightest thou ask, ^q Who he was that darken'd
 "Counsel by Words, without Knowledge? For I am
 "sensible, I have utter'd what I understood not, Things
 "too wonderful for me, which I knew not. But hence-
 "forward I desire to learn of thee; therefore hear I be-
 "seech thee when I speak, and declare unto me what I
 "ask. I have heard of thee before by the hearing of the
 "Ear, (which gave me but a distant Knowledge of
 "thee;) but now I have obtained a more clear and cer-
 "tain Knowledge of thee, for mine Eyes have ^r seen
 "thee: Wherefore I reprove my self for what I have
 "done amiss, and repent in Dust and Ashes.

God was so well pleased with this free and humble Ac-
 knowledgment of *Job*, that he declared himself in Fa-
 vour of *Job* against his injurious Friends, who, by their
 unjust and uncharitable Reflections, instead of being his
 Comforters, had proved his Tormenters. "Where-
 "fore (said God to *Eliphaz* the *Temanite*) my Wrath is
 "kindled against thee and thy two Friends; for ye have
 "not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as my Ser-
 "vant *Job* hath. Therefore now take seven Bullocks,
 "and seven Rams, and go to my Servant *Job*, and offer
 "up for your selves a Burnt-offering; and my Servant
 "*Job* shall pray for you; for his Prayers will I accept;
 "lest I deal with you as you deserve, for not speaking
 "the Truth, as my Servant *Job* hath.

^p Further. See Ch. xlii.

^q Who. See Ch. xxxviii. 2.

^r Seen. See Ch. xlii. 5. This is not
 meant of ocular Demonstration, for God

is invisible; but the Eyes here meant are
 the Eyes of the Mind, or Understanding,
 to which God had revealed himself.

Job's three Friends, frighted with the Menaces of an incens'd God, made haste to provide a Sacrifice to appease the Divine Vengeance which they fear'd ; and when they offer'd, God was pleas'd to accept *Job's* ^r Intercession for them.

After this, God was pleas'd to ^r consider *Job*, by putting an End to his Sufferings, and to reward his Faith and Piety with a much greater Fortune than he was Master of before ; doubling his former Stock in every Respect, except that of his Children ; for he had fourteen thousand Sheep, six thousand Camels, a thousand Yokes of Oxen, and a thousand She-Asses. He had also seven manly Sons, who with three beautiful Daughters every Day graced his Table, and were esteem'd the fairest Women in all that Country, to whom their Father gave an Inheritance among their Brethren.

No sooner was the Fame of *Job's* Recovery, and the Restauration and Addition of his Fortune known, but his ^u Kindred and Acquaintance from all Parts come to congratulate him upon this happy Turn : Nor did they come empty-handed, for every one brought him a Present of Money or some valuable Thing ; so many contributing he soon became exceedingly wealthy ; and to make his terrestrial Happiness still greater, God bless'd him with a Prolongation of Life beyond the common Extent of those Times ; for he lived an hundred and forty Years after his being restored, which made his Age above two hundred Years ; so that he saw the Increase of his Family to the fourth Generation.

^r *Intercession.* *Job* may, not improperly, here be called a Type of that Christian Perfection which the Gospel required in praying for Enemies, as well as Friends.

^r *Consider.* The Text calls this change of *Job's* Condition, the Turning of his Captivity ; which is a Scripture Phrase very often used to signify an End or Finishing of Misery, and a Restauration of Joy and Felicity.

^u *Kindred.* The Text calls them Brothers and Sisters, which according to Scripture-Style used to comprehend all Kindred. Now, among all the rest of *Job's* Friends there is no mention at last made of *Job's* Wife upon this happy Change ; unless she be included in the Number of his Kindred ; which is not unlikely.



A COMPLEAT
HISTORY
OF THE
HOLY BIBLE.



BOOK II.



LET us now return to *Jacob's* Family, whom we left embalming *Joseph*. After whose Death a new King succeeding in *Egypt*, who had no personal Knowledge of *Joseph*, and the whole Generation of People, that in the great *Egyptian* Famine had tasted of *Joseph's* provident Care, being now dead, there remained no other Monument of *Joseph's*

Joseph's Service to the Crown of *Egypt*, but that of the Advancement of its Revenues; which ought to have been a Consideration inducive enough of it self to the new King to be kind to the *Israelites*.

But he look'd with a different Eye upon them; for observing how fast they increas'd, he began to be jealous of their growing Numbers, and seeing the Land of *Goshen* where they lived too scanty to contain them, he fear'd they might one Day elbow him out of his Kingdom. Therefore calling his Council together, he acquaints them with his Fears, who unanimously agree with their jealous Prince in the Expedient he propos'd to check the growing Danger he suspected from the *Israelites*; which was by employing them in making Bricks, and building Store-Cities for *Pharaoh*. And to gratify their Avarice as well as Cruelty, they propos'd not only to reap the Profits of their Service, but by continual hard Labour to impoverish their Spirits, and infeeble their Bodies: Therefore they set Task-masters to oversee and keep them to hard Labour, by which and other servile Work they made their Lives very uncomfortable. But God supported them under their Severities; for the more the *Egyptians* oppress'd them, the more they grew and multiplied; which increas'd their Jealousy to a greater Degree of Cruelty; for the King, to suppress their Growth, spoke to two of the *Hebrew* * Midwives *Shiphrah* and *Puah*, and gave them a strict Charge, that when they should be called to do their Office to the *Hebrew* Women, if the Child were a Son, they should kill him; but if a Daughter, that she should live.

The pious Midwives having a greater Regard to the Law of God and Nature, than to the cruel and unnatural Command of the King, went on in their usual Way, and preserv'd the Male Children; for which *Pharaoh* sends for them, and in great Displeasure reprimands their

* *Midwives*. The Criticks very needlessly, and with more Subtilty than Solidity controvert who these Midwives were, and whether they were *Hebrews* or *Egyptians*.

Without doubt they were *Hebrews*, and, by the King of *Egypt's* Application to them, the most celebrated of their Profession.

EXODUS CHAP. I.

The Israelites bondage.

26



EXODUS 1. Verse 14.

*And they made their lives bitter wth
hard bondage, in mortar, & in brick,
& in all manner of service in y^e field.*

152.



Book II

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Neglect of his Edict: In Excuse for which they tell him, That the *Hebrew Women* were not as the *Egyptian Women*, for they were like * wild Beasts deliver'd before the Midwives could come to them. The Piety of the Midwives in preserving the Male Children was so acceptable to God, that he is said thereupon to deal well with the Midwives; and because they feared God, he made them y Houses. And by this Means the People multiplied, and grew mighty. The King, whether satisfied or not with this Answer of the Midwives, not finding it safe to trust to them any longer, resolves upon a more effectual Method to extirpate the *Hebrews*: And therefore he gave z Charge to all his People, that every Son, that should be born to the *Hebrews*, should be thrown into the River. This cruel Edict for drowning all the Male Children must needs be very afflictive to the *Hebrew Parents*, and put them upon many a thoughtful Contrivance to preserve their Infants: Of which an Instance soon follow'd; for one *Amram* of the House of *Levi* having married a Daughter, of the same Family, named *Jocbebed*, had by her a Daughter, whose Name was *Miriam*, and four Years after a Son, whom they called *Aaron*. About three Years after *Aaron's* Birth *Jocbebed* was deliver'd of another Son, who being a Child of most elegant Beauty, something Supernatural and Divine appearing in his Form, his Mother was the more solicitous for his Preservation. Wherefore she kept him concealed in her House three Months; but not being able longer to hide him, and fearing he might fall into the

* *Wild Beasts*. The *Hebrew Word Chajib*, which is in the Original, signifies not only Animals in general, but *Beasts*, and even *Wild Beasts*, as has been observed by learned Men, and may be seen in several Places of Scripture. And here the Midwives being accused by *Pharaoh* of favouring the *Hebrew Women*, and preserving the Male Children, alledge in their own Defence, that the *Hebrew Women* were of such a robust or brutish Constitution, that they were delivered without the Help of Midwives, like *Wild Beasts*.

† *Houses*. That is, he made them to

prosper, gave them Children, and blessed their Families. The Word *House* being usually in Scripture taken for the Offspring or Family of any one; as the *House of Aaron, Judah, David, &c.* are put for the Family of *Aaron, Judah, David, &c.*

z *Charge*. This inhuman Edict is supposed by Commentators to be so abhorred by the *Egyptians*, that they scarce ever put it in Execution; and that it was recalled immediately after the Death of *Amenophthis*, then King of *Egypt*, who enacted it; which Time *Eusebius* and others place in the Fourth Year of *Moses*.

Hands of those that were appointed to drown the Male Children, she contrived a Way to save him, by making a little Ark or Boat of Bulrushes, which she daubed with Pitch and Slime, to keep the Water out, and putting the Child into it, she laid it among the Flags by the River-side, and set his Sister *Miriam* at a Distance to observe what became of him. But propitious Providence soon interposes, and eases his anxious Parent of her Care; for * *Thermuthis* Pharaoh's only Daughter, coming to the River to bathe herself, her Maids looking for a Retirement for that Purpose discover'd the Ark with the Child in it, which *Thermuthis* commanding them to bring to her, she no sooner uncover'd the Child, but it made its mournful Complaint to her in a Flood of Tears. The Unexpectedness of the Accident, and the extraordinary Beauty of the Child, mov'd the *Egyptian* Princess with Compassion, which she express'd in an Accent of Pity, saying, "This is some *Hebrew* Child, which the "Parents have hid to preserve him from the King's "cruel Edict.

By this Time little *Miriam*, the Child's Sister, had crowded her self in amongst the Attendants of the Princess, and observing with what Tenderness she look'd upon the Child, very officiously offer'd her Service to procure an *Hebrew* Nurse for him: Which the Princess accepts, and away the Girl hastens to her Mother, and brings her to the Place, where she receives the Child from the Princess, who engaged to pay her for her Care. This was no doubt a welcome Bargain to the Mother; who taking the Child home with her, durst now nurse it openly, having a Royal Protection for his Security.

* *Thermuthis*. So *Josephus* calls her; and from him *Philo*, who adds, that she was the King's only Daughter and Heir; and that having been some Time married, but having no Child, she pretended to be big with Child, and to be delivered of *Moses*; whom she own'd as her natural Son. Agreeable to which is what the Apostle to the *Heb.* xi. 24. says, That when *Moses* was grown up,

he scorn'd to be thought the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter. From whence it is plain he was esteemed as such. And if anyone should ask, why he did not in Right of his Mother succeed in the Kingdom? It may reasonably be answered, that the Fraud of his adopted Mother, and his own Adoption, being detested, he could pretend no Right to the Crown of *Egypt*.

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EXODUS CHAP. II. 27
Pharaohs daughter takes Moses out of y^e River.



EXODUS 2. Verse 5.

And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash her self at the river, and her maidens walked along by y^e riverside. 154.



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Some Time after, when he was grown big enough, his Mother brought him to Court to shew him to the Princess, and satisfy her how he had improved under her Care; who grows so fond of him, that she adopted him for her^b Son; and in Remembrance that she had drawn him out of the Water, she called his Name^c *Moses*; and to accomplish him the more, she keeps him at Court, where he is instructed in all the^d Learning and Discipline used among the *Egyptians* both Civil and Military, and in all Things requisite and becoming the Character and Quality of a Prince of the Blood.

Moses being forty Years old left the Court, and went to see his Brethren; and when he reflected on the Oppression they laboured under, it affected him with Compassion and Indignation to see the Servants of the most High God subjected to a Servitude exceeding that of Brutes. This was soon increas'd by an Opportunity that just then offer'd; which was, an *Egyptian* striking an *Hebrew*. This inflam'd *Moses* Zeal, who looking about to see whether any Man was within Sight, he chastises the *Egyptian*, making him expiate his Barbarity to the injur'd *Hebrew* with his * Blood; and afterwards buried him

^b *Jon.* The *Jews* observe, that whoever brings up a Pupil in his House, is in Scripture said to have begotten him. And thus it is said, *Exod. ii. 10.* That *Moses* was the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter, tho' she had only taken care of his Education.

^c *Moses.* At his Circumcision, says *Clement Alexandrinus*, his Parents call'd him *Isachim*, (that is, the Resurrection of the Lord.) from a presaging Hope, that the Lord, thro' him, would raise up his People *Israel*, deliver them from the *Egyptian* Bondage they were then in, and bring them again to the promised Land.

^d *Learning.* From hence, no Doubt, it was, that *St. Stephen*, *Acts vii. 22.* said of *Moses*, that he was learned in all the Wisdom of the *Egyptians*, and was mighty in Words and Deeds. Which, as likewise several other Things, not being read in the Old Testament, are taken out of other Records of the *Jews*. And both *Josephus*, *lib. 1.* and *Clement Alexandrinus*, *lib. 1.* report of *Moses*, That he was General of the *Egyptian*

Forces, obtained a great Victory over the *Ethiopians*, and did many other great Things before he visited his Brethren.

* *Blood.* The Criticks are at great Variance about this Fact of *Moses*, some blaming, others justifying him. In the first Place, we find *Moses* no where in Holy Scripture blamed for this, but rather the contrary; for *St. Stephen*, *Acts vii. 25.* gives a fair Handle to justify him as having Power to do Justice on the Criminal *Egyptian*, he having before that Time been indued with the Title and Office of Deliverer of the People of God. This indeed the Text before cited very much favours. Others object, That it was very unreasonable for *Moses* to kill the *Egyptian* for only striking one of the *Hebrews*. In answer to this the *Hebrews* say, That the *Hebrew*, whom the *Egyptian* struck, was Husband to one *Salomith*, a very beautiful Woman, whom the *Egyptian* had debauch'd. And that therefore *Moses* slew the *Egyptian*, not for striking the *Hebrew*, but for the Adultery

him in the Sand; supposing by his taking upon him thus to administer Justice, and his Brethren would have ^c understood, that God by his Hand would have deliver'd them; but they understood him not. However, the next Day he went out, and shew'd himself among them again; and finding two Men of the *Hebrews* quarrelling, he endeavour'd to reconcile them, putting them in Mind that they were Brethren, and with some Smartness reprehending the Aggressor, he demanded for what Reason he thus attack'd the other? The Fellow thrusting him away with Disdain, replies; "Who made you a Prince and Judge over us? Do you intend to kill me, as you did the *Egyptian* yesterday?" *Moses* was startled at this; for seeing his killing the *Egyptian*, notwithstanding his Circumspection, was no longer a Secret, he bethinks himself of his Security; concluding, that if the Death of the *Egyptian* should reach *Pharaoh's* Ear, he should surely die for it. Whereupon he left *Egypt*, and went to seek his Fortune in *Midian*.

Here was the happy Place, and then the blessed Time, when Majesty guarded only with rural Innocence submitted to the humble Office of a Shepherd, and a Crook instead of a Sceptre graced the peaceful Monarch's Hand. Here *Jethro* first in Quality both of Prince and Priest injoy'd the Blessings of a quiet Reign, whose Daughters laid aside the Distinction of their Birth to feed their Father's Flocks, and took more Delight in the innocent and useful Employment of tending their harmless Sheep, than in the luxurious Gaiety of a Court.

In the Plains of *Midian* there was a Well common to all the Natives of the Place to water their Cattle. Hither *Moses* directed his Steps, as well to rest himself, as allay his Thirst; where whilst he was refreshing himself,

tery which he discover'd from them, whilst they were quarrelling. Others urge, that not all Things are related here, which leave Room for some Conjecture; Thus some say, perhaps the *Egyptian* had almost kill'd the *Hebrew*, and that *Moses* could no

other Way than by Force keep him off: Or that the *Egyptian* attack'd *Moses*, and so he was forc'd to kill him in his own Defence.

^c Understood. See *Acts* vii. 25. where this is positively express'd by St. Stephen.

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the seven Daughters of the Prince of *Midian* came to draw Water to fill the Troughs to give their Sheep; but some churlish Shepherds, having a Mind to serve their own Turn first, came rudely and put the Royal Shepherdesses by. *Moses* seeing this, steps in to their Relief, and chastising the saucy Clowns, made them take to their Heels. The frightened Damsels return'd to the Wells, and *Moses* very officiously assists them in drawing Water for their Flocks: After which, they took their Leave, and hasted home to give their Father an Account of the Generosity of the Stranger, who had protected them against the Insults of the Rusticks. ^f *Jethro* hearing their Story, and not seeing the Person that had thus gallantly defended them, reprehends their Ingratitude and Incivility, asking what was become of the generous Stranger? They told him they left him at the Well: Whereupon he bids them go and invite him home: Where *Moses* is so pleas'd with their courteous Entertainment, that he express'd a Willingness to take up his Residence with them, and undertake the Charge of their Sheep. *Jethro* readily clos'd with the Proposal, and to ingage him the more to his Interest, bestow'd *Zipporah*, one of his Daughters, upon him for a Wife; by whom he had two Sons, the Eldest of which he named *Gershom*, which signifies a Stranger here: For he said, ^g I have been a Stranger in a strange Land; and the Younger he called *Eliezer*, importing, God my Help: For the ^h God of my Father, said he, was my Help, and delivered me from the Sword of *Pharaoh*.

Whilst *Moses* continued in *Jethro's* Family, the King of *Egypt* died: But his Successor prov'd no more favourable to the poor oppress'd *Hebrews*; who changed their Oppressor, but not their Condition; the Miseries of which rather increased than abated. In vain they appeal to the merciless Tyrant and his more cruel Task-masters,

^f *Jethro*. He is called in *Exodus* ii. 18. more commonly, *Jethro*. *Exod.* iii. 1.
^g *Renel*. He is also called *Renel*, *Nam.* x. 29. ^g I have. *Exod.* ii. 21.
^h God. *Exod.* xviii. 4.

who

who lord it over them with unbounded Severity. But God who saw the Affliction of his People, and whose Ears were open to receive their Complaints, look'd with an Eye of Compassion upon them; and the appointed Time of their Deliverance, which he in his secret Providence had determin'd, being near, he began to think of preparing *Moses* for it, whom he intended to make use of as an Instrument in the great Work.

Whilst *Moses* kept his Father-in-Law's Sheep, he one Day¹ led them as far into the Defart as Mount^k *Horeb*, where the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a Flame of Fire out of the Midst of a Bush. *Moses* was startled at the Sight, but that which added to his Admiration and rous'd his Curiosity, was the Continuance of the Bush unconsum'd, notwithstanding it was wholly incompass'd with Flames. This so rare and extraordinary Accident made *Moses* consider it more attentively, and therefore said to himself, I will turn aside and see if I can discover the Reason of this unusual Sight. But the Lord, to prevent his irreverent Approaches, and strike the greater Awe and Sense of the Divine Presence into him, call'd to him out of the Bush and forbade him drawing nearer; and to make him still more sensible of the Sacredness of the Place, God commanded him not to profane it, but to put off his Sandals, for the Ground whereon he stood was¹ Holy. *Moses* being prepar'd for an awful Attention, the Almighty thus discovers himself to him: "I am the God of thy Father, the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*." These Words struck the frighted *Moses* with such Reverence of the Divine Majesty, and Fear of the Effects of his unwitting Presump-

¹ *Led*. Here we may observe the Manner of those Times and Countries, that whereas the Shepherds here drive their Flocks before them, the Shepherds there went before their Flocks, and the Flocks followed them; which Custom is alluded to in *Psal. lxxx. 1.* and *John x. 4.*

^k *Horeb*. Which signifies *Forfaken*, and is here, *Exod. iii. 1.* called the Mountain of God by Way of Anticipation, both from

the following Appearance of God upon it, at this Time, and his descending upon it afterwards, to give the Law to his People, *Ch. xix. 20.* where, tho' it is called *Sinai*, it is the same Place with this, for *St. Stephen* reciting this present Passage in *Acts vii. 30.* calls it Mount *Sinai*.

¹ *Holy*. Meaning, that wherever God, who is Holiness itself, appears, the Place is Holy, while he is there.

EXODUS CHAP. III. 28
 GOD appears to Moyſes in a burning buſh



EXODUS 3. Verſe 2.
*And the angel of the LORD ap-
 peared unto him in a flame of fire,
 out of the miſt of a buſh, etc.* 158.



Book II.

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tion, that he fell on the Ground and covered his Face, not daring to look up on the terrible Glory. But the Lord proceeding, said, "I have seen the Affliction of my People, I have heard their Complaint, and am come down to deliver them out of the Hand of their Oppressors, and to conduct them to the promised Land, a Land that floweth with Milk and Honey; to the Place of the *Canaanites* and *Hittites*, the *Amorites* and the *Perizzites*, the *Hivites* and the *Jebuzites*. And thee have I pitch'd upon to be the Instrument in this great Work; therefore be of good Courage, for I will send thee to *Pharaoh* to demand Liberty of him for my People, the Children of *Israel*." *Moses* considering how Things stood with him in *Egypt*, and upon what Account he left that Court; and probably not knowing that the old King of *Egypt*, who had threatned his Life, was dead, began to excuse himself, urging his own Meanness and Insufficiency to take upon him the Character of an Ambassador. But God remov'd this Difficulty, saying, "I will certainly be with thee: And let this extraordinary Sight, which thou hast now seen, be a Token that I have sent thee: And when thou hast brought the People out of *Egypt*, ye shall serve me on this Mountain." But *Moses*, to evade this Office, increases the Difficulty by urging, "When I come to the Children of *Israel*, and tell them that the God of their Fathers hath sent me to them, and they shall ask me his Name; what shall I say to them? God replied, **I AM THAT I AM**. And thou shalt further say

^m Come. This is speaking according to human Passion, or after the Manner of Men; God vouchsafes to express himself in the Dialect and according to the Capacity of Man, that he may understand him.

ⁿ Milk. This is an Hyperbolical Expression of Fruitfulness and Plenty of good Things.

^o Courage. This is most properly render'd by the *Septuagint*, the Word which we render *Come now*, being an Adverb of Exhorting.

I AM. This denotes the Eternity of God, whose Essence knows no Beginning nor End. And it is common with the *Hebrews* to express the Future in the Present Tense: And for this Reason some turn it, **I WILL BE WHAT I WILL BE**; and contend that it ought to be so render'd, not only from the Letter of the *Hebrew* Text, but from the genuine Sense of the Words: From which others likewise infer that it ought to be so render'd, **I WILL BE for ever**; and **I WILL BE with you** and

“ say to them; I AM THAT I AM, that is, The Lord,
 “ the God of your Fathers, the God of *Abraham*, the
 “ God of *Isaac*, the God of *Jacob* has sent me to you;
 “ that is the Name I have had from all Eternity, and by
 “ that Name will I be known for ever. Go, gather the
 “ 9 Elders of *Israel*, and say to them, The Lord God of
 “ your Fathers hath appeared to me, and said, I have
 “ seen all the Calamities that have befallen you in *Egypt*,
 “ and am resolved to deliver you, and lead you into the
 “ Land of *Canaan*. The *Israelites* shall believe you,
 “ and you shall go to the King of *Egypt*, and say to him,
 “ The God of the *Hebrews* hath commanded us to go
 “ three Days Journey, into the Desert, there to offer
 “ Sacrifice to the Lord our God. This Request, tho’
 “ so very reasonable, I know he will not grant, but
 “ refuse to let you go unless compelled by a powerful
 “ Hand: But I will exert my self in many miraculous
 “ Operations upon him and his Subjects, and at last
 “ he shall permit you to depart, but you shall not go
 “ away empty, for ye shall be loaden with the Spoils
 “ of the *Egyptians*.

This solemn Assurance deliver’d by the Mouth of God, one would be apt to think, might have been sufficient to have encourag’d *Moses* willingly to undertake the Embassy; but either from the Difficulty or Boldness of the Enterprize, or from Diffidence of his own Ability, he declines it, and questions whether the *Israelites* will receive his Credentials. This Objection God immediately removes by a Miracle; for commanding him to throw his Sheep-hook on the Ground, it was instantly turn’d into a Serpent: *Moses* affrighted at this sudden Change of his Sheep-hook, fled from it. But God, to encourage him, bad him take it by the Tail; which he

and redeem you from the Egyptians: And others, I WILL be with you in your present Tribulations and future Calamities. This Name is likewise express’d in Rev. i. 4. by which is signified JEHOVAH, which is the proper Name of God.

9 Elders. By this some mean the Doc-

tors and Governors; but it is most probable the Elders were Heads or Chiefs of Tribes and Families. By which it is plain there was a private Policy and OEconomy continued amongst the *Israelites*, tho’ in this servile Condition.

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EXODUS CHAP. IV. 20
Moses rod is changed into a serpent.



EXODUS 4. Verse 3.4.
*And he said, cast it on y ground,
and he cast it on the ground, and it
became a serpent; etc.*

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had no sooner done but it resumed its former Shape. And at the same Time to convince him that he should not want Credit with the *Israelites*, God gave him Commission to perform the same Miracle before them: And to remove all further Scruple he condescends to give him another Sign, bidding him put his Hand into his Bosom; which he had no sooner done, but it was struck with a ^{*} white Leprosy. And when by God's Command he had put it into his Bosom again, and pluck'd it out, his Flesh had resumed its former Colour and Substance. And yet to arm him sufficiently, and beyond all Question, he was pleased to add a third Miracle: "If they will not believe these two former, *said he*, thou shalt take of the Water of the River and pour it upon dry Land, and the Water shall become Blood."

Still *Moses* excused himself; and his last Plea was, that he wanted Eloquence, the great Qualification of an Ambassador, and that since God had condescended to talk to him, he was more slow of Speech than before. This Objection the Lord was pleased to remove by putting him in Mind of his Omnipotence: "Who made the Mouth of Man, *said he*? And who made the Dumb and the Deaf, and the Blind, and him that sees? Was it not I? Now therefore go, and I will furnish thee with Words, and make thee eloquent." Hitherto *Moses* had some Glimpse of Pretence for his Unwillingness to go; but now all his Objections are answer'd, and his Scruples removed, he very bluntly begs to be excused from this Enterprize, saying, "O my Lord, instead of me, send, I pray thee, by [†]him whom thou wilt send."

^{*} *White Leprosy*. The Evidence of this Miracle was so much the more convincing, because the *White Leprosy*, which was held incurable, was both inflicted and healed in an Instant, without any outward Means, or Physical Application.

[†] *Him. Exod. iv. 13.* The Text says, *Send by the Hand of him that thou wilt send*; where the Word *Hand* is put for the Office or Ministry. But by *Moses's* desiring God to send another instead of him, he

means a Man fitter to execute that Commission than himself was. Who the Person meant is, is much controverted. The *Hebrews* say *Aaron*, who at that Time was a Prophet in *Israel*: Some of them say the *Messias*; and of this Opinion are all the *Latin* Commentators; because the *Jews* in all their more weighty Cases and Affairs had Regard to the promised *Messias*.

So long as *Moses* had any Thing to plead in * Excuse for his not going, God heard him patiently, and graciously condescended to remove his Doubts; but when his Modesty in declining the Office and Honour God proposed to him was turned into an obstinate Refusal, the Lord was angry with him; but in his Anger remembering Mercy, he resumes *Moses's* last Objection, (which he had already answered in general,) and shews him more particularly how to supply that Defect: "Is not *Aaron* the *Levite* thy Brother, said he? He is eloquent, and I will appoint him to meet thee. Tell him what I have said; and be assured that I will always assist you both, and direct you what to say: He shall be the Orator, and thou shalt be to him ^u instead of ^w God. And to strengthen thy Commission, and give thee Credit among my People, take this Rod in thy Hand, for I will enable thee to do many Miracles with it.

Moses having nothing more to urge against this Enterprize, at last yields, and took the ^x Rod of God in his Hand. Then taking his Wife and Sons he left Mount *Horeb*, and went to *Jethro* his Father-in-Law, with whom, it seems, he left them till he had conducted

* *Excuse*. It is the Opinion of several Commentators on this Place, and it is very probable, that *Moses* had another Reason besides his Insufficiency, which made him unwilling to go of this Errand into *Egypt*, and which he was not willing to discover. Just before God appeared to *Moses* in the Bush, and had this Discourse with him, we read, *Exod. ii. 25*. That the King of *Egypt* died; that King in whose Reign *Moses* had slain the *Egyptian*, and who sought to apprehend him, to put him to Death for it. The Report of that King's Death might not probably yet have reach'd *Moses's* Ear. However, he might reasonably think that some of the Kindred of the slain Man were yet living, who might prosecute him for the Murder: And for that Reason he might be unwilling to return to *Egypt*, (from whence on that Occasion he fled for his Life,) lest he should be taken and executed for that Fact. However, it is observable that

God would not free him from that Fear till he had absolutely resigned, and wholly submitted to his Will in going.

^u *Instead*. That is, He shall consult thee instead of me, that from thee he may know my Will, and thou shalt impart to him what thou receivest of me. Consonant to this is that of our Saviour *Christ* to his Apostles, *He that heareth you, heareth me, &c.*

^w *God*. By these Words, *Thou shalt be to him instead of, or as God*. Commentators shew the Power God now invested *Moses* with, in delivering him this Commission, making him not only Chief over *Aaron*, but the rest of the *Israelites*: For this Name of *God* is no where given to Men, but to signify the Power of Life and Death over them.

^x *Rod of God*. So it is now called, since God had so signally honoured it, and as it were, consecrated it to an Holy Use. *Exod. iv. 20.*

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the Children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*; when *Jethro* brought them to him again in the Wilderness.

Moses being thus convinced that God had design'd him the Agent in transacting this grand Affair, whilst he was preparing himself for this Journey, to make him more cheerfully proceed in it, and to dispel his Fears of being called to Account for his former Actions in *Egypt*, God bids him return thither, assuring him that those who had a Design against his Life were dead. Then repeating his former Order, he says, "When thou comest into *Egypt*, be sure to perform all the Miracles I have enabled thee to do: And to illustrate my Power, I will so harden *Pharaoh's* Heart, that he shall refuse to let the Children of *Israel* go till I have slain his Son, even his First-born.

By the Way, God takes Occasion to put *Moses* in Mind of the Danger of Disobedience, to preserve him from lapsing into it hereafter. It seems *Moses* either through Neglect, or Indulgence to his Wife, (who was not an *Israelite*,) had not yet circumcised his Son *Eliezer*, by which he provoked the Lord so highly, that in the Way he threaten'd to ² kill him for this Neglect. His Wife *Zipporah* understanding the Cause of the Divine Displeasure, took a sharp Flint, and immediately circumcised the Child, throwing the Foreskin at her Husband's Feet, she said, "Thou art a Husband of ^a Blood to me." This being over, the Lord pardon'd *Moses*, and dismissed him to pursue his Journey; which

¹ Brought. See *Exod.* xviii. 2, &c.

² Kill him. The Text in *Exod.* iv. 24. being not particular in the Manner, Interpreters differ about it; but that which seems most probable is from the Context, and that *Moses's* Punishment must be Sickness, or some corporal Visitation upon him; otherwise, if he had been in Health, he, and not *Zipporah* his Wife, would have circumcised the Child.

^a Blood. Many, and some vastly wide, are the Opinions of the Learned on this Text. Some will have it spoken to the Child that was circumcised; but neither the Words nor the Circumstances of

the Action can allow that. Undoubtedly the Word *Blood* here refers to the Circumcision, which was the Cause of its Effusion. Nor do they seem to conjecture amiss, who thus interpret this Text: *With the Blood of my Child I preserve and save thee; for the Neglect of the Child's being circumcised being thy Fault, I have saved thy Life by the Blood of the Circumcision, which otherwise God might have taken away.* The best Commentators concur in this, and render it with this little Variation, *Thou art the Cause of the shedding the Blood of the Child, for which Reason I call thee a Husband of Blood.*

he did, and soon arrived at his Father-in-Law *Jethro's* House, whom, as he acquainted not with the particular Reason of his leaving *Egypt*, so neither does he now say any Thing to him of the Vision he had seen, nor the Message he had received from God to deliver to the King of *Egypt*; but, as he had enter'd himself by Contract into *Jethro's* Service, and become so nearly related as to be his Son-in-Law, he thought it but decent Civility, as well as Reason, to ask his Consent to return to *Egypt* to visit his Brethren, and see whether they were living. *Jethro* readily gave Consent in the usual Form, "Go in Peace.

Moses being now on the Way to *Egypt*, the Lord ^b commanded *Aaron* his Brother to go into the Wilderness to meet *Moses*. *Aaron* obeyed the Holy Call, and went as far as Mount *Horeb*, where he met his Brother, and imbraced him; to whom *Moses* told all that God had commanded him, and the Wonders he was to perform.

The two Brothers thus join'd in Commission (though *Moses* was the Sovereign) repair to *Egypt*, and summoning the Elders of the People together, *Aaron* delivers the Message which the Lord had sent by *Moses*, which *Moses* straightway confirm'd by doing the Miracles which God had commanded in the Sight of the People, who thereupon believed and received them joyfully. And now all being convinc'd that the Lord had taken Compassion on the wretched Condition of the Children of *Israel*, that he had visited them in their Affliction, and had taken a Course for their Deliverance, they fell down and worshipped him.

Soon after they repair to the *Egyptian* Court; and being admitted into the Presence, they delivered their Message to the King in these Words, "Thus saith the Lord God of *Israel*, Let my People go, that they may celebrate a Feast to me in the Desert." The haughty

^b Commanded. Hence it's plain, that *Aaron* as a Prophet received a Revelation from God: Which is likewise confirmed, 1 Sam. ii. 27. Did not I plainly ap-

pear to the House of thy Father when they were in *Egypt*? For *El* was descended from *Aaron*.

Pharaoh affronted at this Freedom of Speech from an inflav'd People, profanely demands, "Who is the Lord, whom ye call the God of *Israel*? Am not I sole Monarch here? I own not *Israel's* God; nor will I let you go." *Moses* and *Aaron*, to inform him whom they meant by the Lord replied, "The God of the *Hebrews*, whom we adore, hath commanded us to offer Sacrifice to him; therefore we beg Leave to go three Days Journey into the Desert, that we may pay due Adoration to our God, lest he punish us for our Disobedience, and you much more for hindring us." The King incens'd at this unusual Liberty they took, and looking upon them as Incendiaries, sharply reprimands them, saying, "Why do ye hinder the People from Work? Because they are numerous, you would incite them to rebel: Be gone all to your Labour, or I'll make you sensible of Royal Displeasure.

The King having thus rudely dismissed *Moses* and *Aaron*, gave Charge to the Task-masters that they should no more give the People Straw to make Brick, as they had done before; but make them go gather Straw for themselves where they could find it; but yet to lay upon them the same Tale of Bricks without Abatement: For, said he, they are idle, and this is but a Pretence to excuse them from their Work. The Task-masters acquainted their Under-Officers with this severe Injunction, who immediately tell it to the People, and they accordingly are forced to wander about the Country to seek for Stubble instead of Straw; the Task-masters at the same Time exacting from them their usual Number of Bricks; which when they were not able to perform, the Under-Officers, who were *Israelites*, and whom the Task-masters had set over them, were called to Account, and beaten. They not well knowing from whence this Severity proceeded, whether from the Edict of the King, or the Rigour of the Task-masters, complained to the King himself; and laying their Grievance before him in most humble Manner, expos-

tulated the Matter with him thus: " Why should the
 " King deal so severely with his Servants? The Task-
 " masters allow us no Straw, and yet demand Brick of
 " us, which is impossible to be done: And though
 " they are in Fault, yet are we punished.

The poor *Israelite* Officers, instead of Redress, meet
 with an Addition to the Cause of their Complaint; the
 King tells them they shall have no Straw, and yet deliver
 the full Tale of Bricks. This Answer gave them much
 Uneasiness, and drove them almost to Despair; so that
 meeting with *Moses* and *Aaron* in the Way as they came
 from *Pharaoh*, and looking upon them as the Cause of
 having these heavier Burdens laid upon them, they unad-
 visedly giving way to their present Passion, discharg'd
 their Grief and Anger upon them, saying, " The Lord
 " ^c revenge us on you; for ye have made us hateful
 " and abominable in the Sight of the King and his Sub-
 " jects, and have given them ^d Occasion to oppress us
 " the more.

This was very afflicting to *Moses*, who expected a
 more grateful Return for his Care and Concern for
 them; wherefore retiring from them, he address'd him-
 self to God in this humble Expostulation: Why, O
 " Lord, hast thou thus afflicted this People? For since
 " I spoke to *Pharaoh* in thy Name, he hath treated them
 " with more Severity than before; and they are more
 " unlikely to be delivered than ever." *Moses's* Concern
 for the Oppression of the *Israelites* made him forget the
 Promise God had given him, and the Perverseness of
Pharaoh, which he had foretold: However God, to
 incourage him, gives him this gracious Answer. " I
 " am the Lord, the Almighty God, that appeared to

^c *Revenge.* Thus the *Chaldee* Para-
 phrase, and not disagreeable to the *He-*
brews, who often by Metonymy take
Judgment for the Bound or End of *Judg-*
ment. Thus to judge is often used for
 to revenge.

^d *Occasion.* The Text is in *Exod.* v. 21,
He have put a Sword into their Hand to

slay us. Which cannot be literally taken
 here; for the *Egyptians* had both the Civil
 and Military Sword always in their Power,
 to use as they pleased. But this is a Scrip-
 ture Phrase, and is often used to express
 any pungent Calamity or Affliction. Thus
 it is in *Isa.* lxxvi. 16. and *Amos* ix. 10.

" *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*: Was I not even known
 " to them by my Name * *Jehovah*? Be assured that I
 " the Lord, who made a Covenant with their Fathers
 " to give to their Posterity the Land of *Canaan*, have
 " heard their Complaints and remember'd my Promise.
 " Therefore say thus to the Children of *Israel*, I am
 " *Jehovah*, who exist only of my self, and give Ex-
 " istence to all Beings. Tell them I will deliver them
 " from the *Egyptian* Slavery with the Power of my Al-
 " mighty Arm, and inflict heavy Judgments on those
 " that oppress them. Nor will I only deliver you all
 " from this Bondage, but I will take you under my im-
 " mediate Protection; ye shall be my People, and I will
 " be your God: And ye shall know that I am *Jehovah*
 " your God, who will release you from the Oppressions
 " of *Egypt*; and I will bring you into the Land, con-
 " cerning which I^f lifted up my Hand in Confirmation
 " that I would give it to *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*,
 " in their Posterity; and I will give it you for an In-
 " heritance. I am *Jehovah*, the Lord, that promise
 " this, and that can and will do it.

* *Jehovah*. Almost all Translations make God to say *Exod. vi. 3.* to *Moses* that he was not known to *Abraham, Isaac* and *Jacob*, by his Name *Jehovah*, though God say expressly to the first of those Patriarchs, *I am Jehovah, who brought thee from Ur of the Chaldeans, Gen. xv. 7.* And that *Abraham* himself says to the King of *Sodom*, *I have lift up my Hands unto Jehovah, the most High Possessor of Heaven and Earth, Gen. xiv. 22.* And that *Moses* observes that Men began to call upon the Name of *Jehovah* in the Days of *Seth*. Interpreters take a great deal of Pains to adjust this seeming Contradiction, to preserve to *Moses* the pretended Privilege of having first known God by the Name of *Jehovah*: But if they would consider that the Hebrew Particle *Lo*, which is in the Original, is often taken interrogatively, they would readily grant that it is to be taken so in this Place. In some Copies of the *Septuagins* this Text is render'd,

I have even manifested my self to them by my Name Jehovah. The most learned *Rabbies* also have not understood it otherwise, when they observe that this Particle is not absolutely negative, but comparative, as in several other Places of Scripture; particularly where the Versions in *Gen. xxxii. 28.* make God to say, *Thy Name shall be no more called Jacob, but Israel*, tho' that Patriarch was afterwards often called by his first Name, as we have already observed. We must therefore rectify this by translating, *Was not I even known to them by my Name Jehovah?* Which takes away the seeming Contradiction, and resolves all the Difficulties that may be propos'd on this Subject.

^f *Lifted*. This is a Phrase often used in Scripture to express Swearing, which was usually done by lifting up of Hands: Thus we find it in *Gen. xiv. 22. Numb. xiv. 30. Dent. xxxii. 40.* and in many other Places.

Moses accordingly repairs to the Children of *Israel*, and delivers his Message as God had commanded: But they considering the sad Increase of their Servitude ever since *Moses* undertook to be their Deliverer, were so prejudiced against him, that they would not believe him. Upon which he left them till either the Extremity of their Sufferings, or the Hand of God eminently appearing in plaguing their Oppressors, should awaken them to a greater Desire of Deliverance. But God, pursuing the Ends of his Providence, commands *Moses* to go to the King of *Egypt*, and demand the Liberty of his People. *Moses* having but a little before been so roughly dismiss'd *Pharaoh's* Presence, and so unkindly rejected by the *Israelites*, declines the Errand by drawing an Argument from each: "Since the Children of *Israel*, says he, thine own People would not hear me, though what I offered was so much to their Advantage, how can I expect that so wicked a Prince as *Pharaoh* is should give Credit to such a Stammerer as I am, in a Matter so much to his Loss?" But the Lord, as before, is still patient in hearing and removing *Moses's* Objections; and therefore tells him, "Consider I have made thee as a ^h God to *Pharaoh*, and *Aaron* thy Brother shall be thy Interpreter or Orator. Thou shalt tell him all that I have commanded thee, and ye shall demand of *Pharaoh* the Deliverance of my People. And that thou mayst not be discouraged by a Repulse as before, take Notice that *Pharaoh* shall give no Credit to what thou sayst, that I may thereby shew my Power and Wonders on him and his People, and deliver the Children of *Israel* by the Strength of my Hand:

^h Stammerer. The Word in the Text, *Exod. vi. 12.* is render'd. *Who am of uncircumcised Lips*, that is, slow of Speech; for *Moses* labour'd under a Defect in his Tongue, as he urged when God first pitched upon him to undertake the Deliverance of his People. But the Word *Uncircumcised* is phraseologically used upon several Occasions by the *Hebrews*; as when they call any one *uncircumcised in*

Heart, Mind, or Tongue. they mean one that labours under a Defect in any of these. Besides, as Circumcision was the first and greatest Sacrament among them, so Uncircumcision was esteemed by them the greatest Scandal and Disgrace.

^h God. That is, by exercising the Judgments of God upon him, thou shalt be as terrible to him as God,

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"For since *Pharaoh* hath begun to harden his Heart
 "in contemptuously treating me, and abusing my
 "People, I will now permit him to go on in his obsti-
 "nate Humour, that I may exert my Power in mi-
 "raculous Operations in the Land of *Egypt*. There-
 "fore when ye come into *Pharaoh's* Presence, and
 "he shall demand a Miracle of you, to convince him
 "of the Truth of your Message, thou shalt direct *Aaron*
 "to cast his Rod on the Ground before *Pharaoh*, and
 "it shall be turned into a Serpent." Thus instructed
 they appear before *Pharaoh*, and delivered their Mes-
 sage; which he rejecting, *Aaron* cast down his Rod
 before the King in the Sight of his Servants, and it
 became a Serpent. To confront this Miracle the King
 presently sends for his ⁱ Magicians, who by their In-
 chantments perform the same that *Aaron* did by God's
 immediate Power: For throwing down their Rods, they
 became in Appearance Serpents, yet with this Diffe-
 rence, that *Aaron's* devoured theirs, and resumed its
 wonted Form.

This harmless Miracle made no Impression on the ob-
 stinate Tyrant, for it had no mischievous Effect to
 King or People, who look'd on it but as a Trial of
 Skill between Artists: Therefore God resolves to make
 use of more sensible Scourges, and afflict the *Egyptians*
 with such a Succession of Plagues, as should compel
 them to dismiss the enslav'd *Israelites*; and having ob-
 serv'd to *Moses*, that *Pharaoh's* Heart was hardened,
 he bid him take the Rod, which had been turn'd into
 a Serpent, and offer himself in *Pharaoh's* View, at his
 usual Time of coming to the Banks of the River *Nile*;

ⁱ *Magicians*. Two of which, who pro-
 bably were the most eminent of the Com-
 pany, are by the Apostle named *Jannes*
 and *Jambres*, 2 *Tim.* iii. 8. not from any
 Place of the Old-Testament, but from
 some other Records of the *Jews*; as di-
 vers other Things mentioned in the New-
 Testament, viz. *Moses's* being brought
 up in the *Egyptian* Learning, *Acts* viii.

v. 22. and so likewise of his being for-
 ty Years of Age, v. 23. when he went
 to visit his Brethren, which is not in
Exod. ii. And so his having before-
 hand either some Instinct or Revelation
 from God, that he should be a *Deliverer*
 of his People, which seems to be refered
 to in *Acts* vii. 25. but is not in the Old-
 Testament.

giving him this farther Instruction: "Tell him the
 "Almighty God of the *Hebrews* hath sent thee to
 "him; and tho' he hath been so obstinate hitherto
 "to detain the *Israelites*, their God will afflict him
 "for his Perverseness: That he will make him sensi-
 "ble by his Judgments, which he will inflict upon
 "him and his People:" And, to encourage *Moses* in
 the Execution of his Commission, he promises his
 Assistance in the Performance of the first Miracle,
 which was turning the Water of the River into
 Blood.

Moses obeys, and at the appointed Time waits the
 King's coming to the ^k River, and throwing himself
 in the Way, accosts him with this Message. The in-
 fidel Prince, obdurate to all the Rhetorick of the two
 heavenly Missionaries, persists in his Resolution (so
 little did the first Miracle operate on him; and tho'
Moses and *Aaron* admonished him of the Omnipotence
 of their God, he would not believe them. Upon
 which *Aaron* receiving the Rod from *Moses* lifted it
 up as God had commanded, and striking the Water,
 it turned into * Blood; which immediately stagnating,
 grew so offensive with its poisonous Putrefaction, that

* *River*. This is the River *Nilus*, which is incomparably the most famous River in the World, whether we consider the Greatness of it, (for it runs about nine hundred German Miles) or the Things it produces, or the miraculous Ebbing or Flowing of it. It is absolutely called in the Scripture *Nachal Mifraim*, the River of *Egypt*: From whence the Word *Nile* is not unnaturally derived *Nahal*, *Naal*, *Neel*, *Neil*. And *Pomponius Mela*, l. 5. c. 10. reports, That the Fountain of *Nile* is called *Nachal* by the *Ethiopians*. Now whereas God says to *Moses*, *Exod. vii. 15. Go to Pharaoh in the Morning, when he shall go forth to the Water*, we may reasonably suppose, as the *Persians* every Morning worshipped the Rising-Sun, so the *Egyptians* every Morning did the *Nile*, and that this going forth of the King to the River was a constant Act of Devotion: And it is

not unlikely, that their great Deity *Osiris* was worshipped for *Nilus*. The Fountain of this River is now known to be in the Mountains called the *Mountains of the Moon*, and one of the Titles of *Prefter John* is, *King of Goyome*, where *Nile* begins; but the Ancients were totally ignorant of it, inasmuch that this was reckoned among the Proprieties of *Nilus*, that it concealed its Spring, of which *Lucan* takes Notice in his tenth Book.

* *Blood*. *Theodoret* upon *Exodus* says thus of this Change of the Waters of *Nile*: Being changed into Blood they accused the *Egyptians* of the Murder of the Infants. And the Book of *Wisdom* xi. 6. makes the same Observation: Instead of a Fountain of running Water, the Enemies were troubled with corrupt Blood, which was to rebuke the Commandment of the killing of the Children.

the

EXODUS CHAP. VII.
Aarons rod devours & Magicians rods.

30



EXODUS 7. Verse 12.

*For they cast down every man
his rod, and they became serpents: but
Aarons rod swallowed up their rods.*

170.

Book I

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the Fish were suffocated, and the Inhabitants were forced to dig for Water in new Places to allay their thirst. And notwithstanding this Plague continued upon them for seven Days, yet *Pharaoh* was still obstinate; and the more, because *Moses* being known to have had his Education among the *Egyptians*, the King concluded, that all this was performed by magical Skill. Wherefore calling for his Magicians he put them upon the same Trial; who taking some of the Water which the *Egyptians* had digged, by their Incantments they made him believe that they turned it to Blood. And tho' this was but a Delusion, yet it convinc'd *Pharaoh* that what *Moses* and *Aaron* had done, was not the Effect of any supernatural Virtue, but a meer Trick of Art, and thereupon returns resolute to stop the *Israelites*.

But Heaven pursues him with repeated Miracles; for as soon as the seven Days are expired, *Moses* at the Command of God accosts him again and renews his Instances for the Delivery of the *Israelites*; threatening upon his Refusal to bring upon the Land such prodigious Numbers of Frogs, as should visit him and his Subjects in their most private Recesses. *Pharaoh* regardless of his Threats defies him; upon which *Moses* gives *Aaron*¹ order to take the Rod, and stretch forth his Hand with it over the River, which in an Instant so affected all the Waters of *Egypt*, that, not waiting for the slow Productions of Nature, the animated Streams unburthen themselves upon the Land in Shoals of Frogs; which immediately invade all Parts, infesting even the Royal Palace with their ungrateful Croaking. Now again *Pharaoh* had recourse to his Magicians, who by their mimick Power so deluded him, that they made him believe they wrought the same Miracle; which harden'd *Pharaoh* for a while; but

¹ Order. It may be observed from the Miracles, who was the Director or Exod. vii. 19. and viii. 5. that *Aaron* Sovereign, and gave to *Aaron* the Power received Order from *Moses* to perform delegated to him from God.

the loathsome Plague pursuing him and his People wherever they went, he is forc'd to apply himself to *Moses* and *Aaron* for Relief, offering to capitulate with their God upon Terms of Permission for them to go and sacrifice to him. *Moses* demands the Time when this shall be put to an Issue, and they both agree upon the next Day. Accordingly *Moses* addresses himself to God, and the Frogs soon died, which the People gathered in Heaps, so that the Land stank of them before they could be dispos'd of.

The Infidel Prince, thinking the God of the *Hebrews* had discharg'd all his Plagues, unfaithfully breaks his Word, and refuses to let the *Israelites* go to serve their God. This Violation so provokes the Almighty, that he resolves to treat the haughty Tyrant in a more surprising manner than he had hitherto done; for before, he first denounced his Judgments, giving him Warning, that he might escape them: But now he will give him no further Notice, and therefore commands *Moses* to direct *Aaron* to stretch out his Rod and strike the Dust with it, that it might become ^m Lice. *Aaron* obeys, and straightway the animated Dust turns into swarms of Vermine, which the Magicians, who had faintly imitated the former Plagues, now attempt in vain; they own their Art out-done, and acknowledge this to be the inimitable Work of a divine Hand.

^m *Lice*. What kind of Creature this was, is not certainly known, the Versions and Commentators differing very much in their Opinion of it. The *Septuagint* translate it here, and in *Psal.* cv. 31. *Knipes*, and so *Philo* and the vulgar Edition retain the Word; which seems to come from the Word *Knizein*, which signifies to prick, and they were a kind of Gnat. In this *Pliny*, *Columella*, *Hesychius* and *Origen* agree. Yet *Junius* and *Tremellius*, the *French*, *English* and divers other Translations render it by *Lice*, and *Lice* too might have Wings. It seems to me most probable, that it was some new kind of Creature called Analogically by an old known Name, which is *Peregrinus's* Conjecture, and is approved by

Rivet. And this I take to be the Reason, why the Magicians could not counterfeit this Miracle, as it was easy for them to do those of the *Serpents*, the *Blood*, and the *Frogs*; which were Things to be had every where. This, I think may pass for a more probable Cause than the Fancy of the *Hebrews*, who say, that the Devil's Power is bounded to the producing of no Creature less than a Grain of Barley; or than St. *Augustine's* allegorical Reason, and too Poetical even for Poetry, who affirms, that the Magicians failed in the third Plague, to shew the Defect of human Philosophy when it comes to the Mystery of the Trinity. But such whimsical Allusions and Conjectures do more hurt than good in Divinity.

Yet

EXODUS CHAP. VIII.
The plague of Frogs.

31



EXODUS 8. Verse 6.

*And Aaron stretched out his hand o-
ver the waters of Egypt; and the frogs
came up; & covered all y^e land of Egypt.*

172.

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Yet now again, notwithstanding the Obstinacy of *Pharaoh*, who would not in the least hearken to *Moses* and *Aaron*, God condescended to give him another Summons. "Rise up (says God to *Moses*) early in the Morning, and meet *Pharaoh* as he comes to the River: Tell him, thus saith the Lord; Let my People go that they may serve me, or I will send Swarms of ^a Flies upon thee and thy People, which shall fill their Houses, and cover the Face of the Earth: And that thou mayst know, that this is brought as a Judgment upon thee and thy Subjects for oppressing my People, I will on that Day separate the Land of *Goshen*, in which my Servants dwell, from the rest of *Egypt*, that the Flies shall not molest them." Accordingly, upon *Pharaoh's* not submitting, the next Day Clouds of swarming Insects fill the Air, which in numberless Troops descend to the Earth, and with their sullen and unusual Noise surprize and affright the wretched Inhabitants. All Attempts prove vain and fruitless to remove this increasing Evil; their most private Recesses cannot secure them from the poisonous Bitings of these revengeful Animals, and a Succession of painful Misery invades them on all Sides. Not *Pharaoh's* Guards can save him from the pungent Attacks of this flying Host, which boldly swarm about and seize the very Weapons they should draw in their Master's Defence. The Sword and Spear are useless to repel this airy Foe, whose penetrating Sting is sharper than their Point. The Magicians with confusion look upon this direful Plague, and no more pretend to offer at any Imitati-

^a Flies. So our English Translation. St. Jerom says, *All Sorts of Flies*. The Septuagint *Kanomwryan*, a particular Kind of Fly called a *Dog-Fly*, from his Biting. Some translate this a *Mixture of Beasts*: The French, *une meslee de Bestes*, Junius and Tremellius, *Colluviem*, and Josephus seems to understand it of several Sorts of wild Beasts that infested the

Country; which is not very probable, for the Punishments hitherto were rather troublesome than mortal; tho' this Punishment of infinite Numbers of small Tormentors is so great a one that God calls them *his Army*. Joel ii. 25. say his *Great Army*. The Locust, the Cankerworm, and the Caterpillar, and the Palmer-worm, my great Army, which I sent among you.

on: A general Horror pervades the Towns and Fields, and all the Country echoes with the Cries of tortur'd Men and Cattle. *Pharaoh* not able to indure this Plague calls presently for *Moses* and *Aaron*, and in a fullen discontented Tone bids them go and sacrifice to their God, but not beyond the Bounds of *Egypt*. He was desirous of Relief, but unwilling to part with a People, by whose Slavery he had reap'd so great Advantage; and being a Stranger and Enemy to the true God, he did not conceive, that the *Israelites* could not acceptably sacrifice to their God whilst under the *Egyptian* Bondage. *Moses*, not willing to provoke, but rather convince *Pharaoh*, discreetly answer'd; We cannot sacrifice to our God in this Land, for that would be an ^o Affront to the *Egyptians*, and they will be reveng'd on us. Permit us therefore to avoid their Resentment by going three Days Journey into the Wilderness, and sacrifice to our God as he hath commanded us. If nothing else will serve you, said *Pharaoh*, but to go into the Desert, I will let you go, but not far: And in return for this Concession, intreat your God to remove this Plague. *Moses* promised to intercede for him, but cautions *Pharaoh* to be sincere in his Grant; and being gone from his Presence address'd himself to God to remove the Plague of Flies. His Prayers are heard, and the Insects take their flight; but *Pharaoh* no sooner found himself deliver'd from this Judgment, but returns to his former Obstinacy, and positively forbad the *Israelites* to stir out of his Dominions.

Upon this high Provocation God sent *Moses* again to *Pharaoh* with this Message: "Thus saith the God of the *Hebrews*; Let my People go that they may serve me, or be assured I will visit all thy Cattle that are in the Field with a grievous Murrain; and

^o *Affront*. That is, if we should sacrifice those Creatures which the *Egyptians* worship for Gods, as the Ox and

the Sheep, they will be affronted to see us sacrifice their Gods to our God.

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"to make thee still more sensible of my Omnipotence, I will by a wonderful Distinction preserve the Cattle of my People, whilst I destroy those of the Egyptians." This by *Pharaoh's* Obstinacy was fatally verified upon the *Egyptians* Cattle the next Day: The generous Horse loaths his full Manger and lov'd Pastures, and sinks under his Rider; the Ass and Camel can no longer support their Burdens, or their own Weight; the labouring Ox drops down dead before the Plough; the harmless Sheep die bleating, and the faithful Dogs lie gasping by them.

Though *Pharaoh* saw one Part of Nature extinct before his Eyes, he continued his former Temper, and resolved still to brave Heaven with his impious Perverseness. And remembring what *Moses* said of the Preservation of the *Israelites* Cattle, he sends to *Goshen* to learn how it had fared with them; and is assured there was not one of the Cattle of the *Israelites* dead; by which he might have seen, that this was no Casualty, but a direct Judgment upon him, exactly answering the divine Prediction. Notwithstanding this he will not be convinced, but continues in his former Resolution, not to let the *Israelites* go.

Therefore since neither Admonitions nor Threats will prevail upon his obdurate Heart, God resolves to surprize him with a Plague without giving him any Warning; and immediately commands *Moses* and *Aaron* to take Handfuls of Ashes from the Furnace, and before *Pharaoh's* Face to throw them in the Air. The pregnant Ashes soon spread the dire Contagion, and the tainted Air infects the *Egyptians* Blood with its poisonous Influence; which appears upon their Skin in swelling & Scabs and Ulcers, and their whole Con-

^p Scabs, &c. This by *Moses*, *Exod. ix. 10.* is called *Ulcus inflationum germinans in homine, &c.* Sprouting out with Blains, &c. which *Junius* and *Tremellius* render, *Erum-pens multis pullulis.* This in *Deut. xviii. 27.* is one of the Curses with which Disobedience to God is threatened, *The Lord shall smite thee with the Botch of Egypt, &c.*

From hence I believe came the Calumny which *Trog. Pompeius, Diod. Siculus, Tacitus* and other Heathens cast upon the *Hebrews*, viz. that they were expelled *Egypt* for being scabbed and leprous; which Mistake was easy, instead of being dismiss'd for having brought those Diseases upon the *Egyptians*.

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stitution became a noisom Spring of Sores. This Plague was so torturing, that the Magicians (who possibly once more would have tried their Skill to see if they could regain their Credit) were not able to stand before *Moses*, for it affected them as well as the rest of the *Egyptians*.

And now *Pharaoh*, whose Obstinacy before proceeded from his natural Aversion to the Servants of the true God, is judicially harden'd by the Almighty Lord, who resolves to make him a Monument of his Power to all Posterity. He makes the Powers of Heaven the Instruments of his Revenge, and calling to *Moses*, he gives him this Charge; "Go early in the Morning to the King of *Egypt*, and tell him, that I the God of the *Hebrews* demand the Liberty of my People that they may worship me; which if he refuse, he may be assured I will shower my ⁹Plagues upon him and his People; and I will make him know, that I am the only God on Earth. Say further to him: ^rIf when lately I smote the Cattle with the Murrain, I had smitten thee and thy People with Pestilence, thou hadst been cut off from the Earth. But I have reserved thee to shew my Power upon, and by the Judgments I shall inflict upon thee, I will publish my Name to all the World. Oppress not, nor detain my People; for if thou dost, to ^tMorrow by this Time, (unless thou submittest thy self) I will send such a Storm of Hail from Heaven upon *Egypt*, as never was known

⁹ *Plagues*. By *Plagues* in this Place (viz. *Exod. ix. 14.*) is not meant, that God would send all the *Plagues* which he afterwards inflicted successively, but those which attended this Plague from Heaven, as Hail, Thunder, Lightning, Rain.

^r *If, &c.* Here God shews that he wanted not Power to destroy *Pharaoh* and his Subjects for oppressing his People *Israel*; but that he reserv'd him for greater Punishment: And therefore the *Chaldee Paraphrase* renders *Exod. ix. 15.* *If when I lately smote the Cattle with the*

Murrain, I had smitten thee and thy People with Pestilence, thou hadst been cut off from the Earth. And this God said, to let the *Egyptians* know, that he did not do this only to threaten them, but that he was able to cut them off when he pleased, by the same Power that he before destroy'd the Cattle.

^t *Morrow*. It is very common in Scripture to find the particular Time express'd; which is used only to shew the Certainty of Providence.

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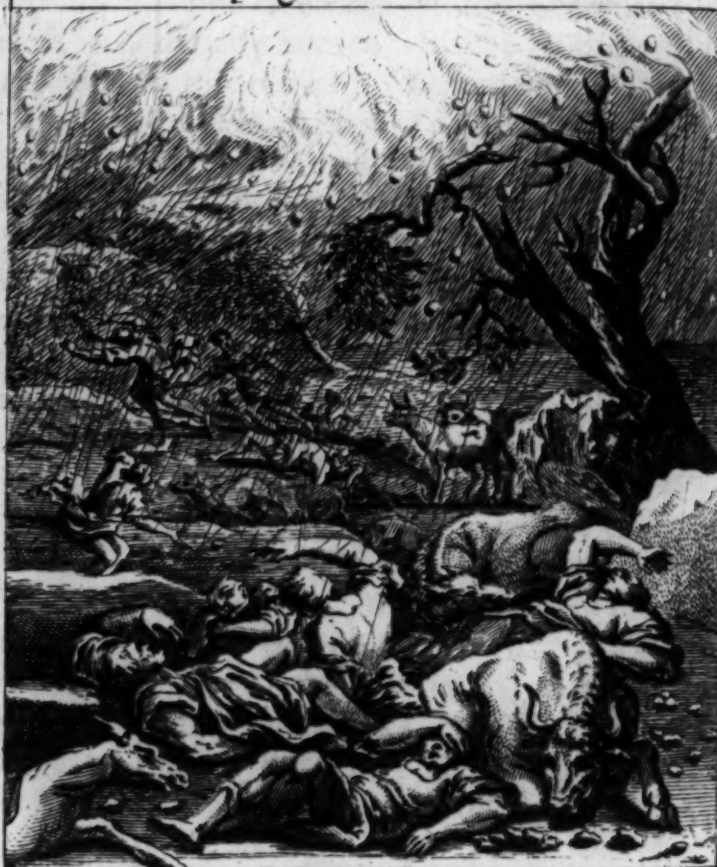
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EXODUS CHAP. IX.
The plague of Thunder & Hail.

32



EXODUS 9. Verse 24.

*So there was hail, and fire mingled with
the hail, very grievous, such as there was
none like it in all the land of Egypt.*

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“ since it was ^a Nation. And that thou mayest not
 “ lose what Cattle the Murrain left, (which being
 “ not in the Field escaped that Plague) send thy Ser-
 “ vants, and let them drive them under Shelter; for
 “ upon every Man and Beast, which shall be found
 “ in the Field, the Storm shall fall, and they shall
 “ surely die.

This threatening Message did not so far affect *Pharaoh* as to take Care of himself or People; but some of them, who had been ^u Witnesses of the dreadful Wrath of God, made a prudent Use of the divine Caution, and housed their Cattle in Time, by which Means they were preserved.

And now the Time appointed being come, *Moses* attends the harden'd King, and to convince him of the Truth of what he had threaten'd him with, waves his Wand in the Air, which soon began to murmur in imperfect Sounds, till the full-charged Clouds with impetuous Force burst and discharged themselves in such terrible Peals of Thunder, as shook the whole Frame of Nature. This is succeeded by a stony Shower of monstrous Hail, such as Winter never yet produced from her stormy Magazines, which cover'd the Ground with the scatter'd Ruins of Trees and Houses, and the dead Bodies of Men and Beasts. Nor does the divine Vengeance stop here; the Heavens become a Body of liquid Fire, which darting on the Ground glides o'er the Waters, and every Place with dreadful Horror. This shocks the haughty Tyrant, who seeing Nature (as he imagined) ready to dissolve, melts into Penitence, and confesses himself guilty. But this being an Act of Necessity, not of Virtue, it dies with his Fear, which *Moses* foresaw; for when *Pharaoh* beg'd him

^a A Nation. Egypt was first inhabited by *Mesraim* (whence it is called in Hebrew, *Mesraim*, and to this Day by the Turks, *Mesra*) the Son of *Cham*.

^u Witnesses. *Exod. ix. 20.* It is said of those that secured their Cattle by hous-

ing them before the Storm, that they feared the Lord; which implies not a reverential Fear, but a servile Fear, into which they had been terrified by the Judgments God had inflicted on them.

to intercede to God for him, and to remove this Plague, *Moses* tells him, he will answer his Request, but assures him he knows he does not mean sincerely, and that his Repentance was only the Effect of his Fright. Of this the Lord (as he had done before) gave *Moses* Notice: “ I have harden’d his Heart, *said he*, and the Hearts
“ of his Servants, that I may shew these my Wonders
“ before them, and that thou mayst tell in the hearing
“ of thy Sons, and the *Israelites* to succeeding Gene-
“ rations, what Prodigies I have wrought in *Egypt*,
“ that ye may all know, that I am the Lord, the Al-
“ mighty *Jehovah*. Wherefore go to *Pharaoh*, and
“ tell him; Thus saith the Lord God of the *Hebrews*,
“ Why dost thou persist in thy Obstinacy? Let my
“ People go, that they may serve me, or I will bring
“ the Locust into thy Land to morrow, which shall
“ come in such Swarms, as shall cover the Surface of
“ the Earth, and devour all the ^w Products of it that
“ have escaped the former Plagues. And this shall prove
“ such a Plague as none of thy Predecessors ever saw.

Moses, having deliver’d this Message to *Pharaoh*, withdrew; which the Courtiers perceiving, and fearing *Moses* was gone to call down more Plagues upon them, very roughly accost their King, desiring him to let the *Israelites* go to serve their God, lest he destroy’d them all for his Obstinacy. Their Importunity prevailed more than God’s Threats and Judgments; therefore sending for *Moses* and *Aaron*, he told them they might go and serve their God; but only the Men, not Women or Children. *Moses* insisted upon all the *Israelites* going, young and old, Sons and Daughters; nay, and their Flocks and Herds: “ For we must hold a Feast,
“ *says he*, to the mighty *Jehovah*, and all must be at it.” This put *Pharaoh* out of Temper, for he look’d upon this Demand as very insolent; therefore he bad them look to it, and consider well what they insisted on, and in a very threatening manner dismiss’d them.

¶ *Products.* That is, the Wheat and the Bye, *Lev.* ix. 32. which before had not sprouted out of the Earth.

Moses

Moses being thus again repulſed, by God's Command, ſtretch'd out his Hand with the Rod in it, and immediately a * ſcorching hot Wind blew all that Day and the Night following, which by next Morning drove endleſs Legions of devouring Locuſts, which left the Earth as naked and depopulate, as if the Northern Storms of Winter had invaded it. The happy Product of the fertile Nile, and all that bountiful Nature afforded, was carried off by theſe airy Pillagers. Pharaoh began to be a little more ſenſibly touch'd with this Plague than any of the former; for he plainly foreſaw that the Deſtruction of the Fruits of the Earth muſt in Time prove the Deſtruction of Man and Beaſt; therefore calling haſtily for Moses and Aaron, he in a more ſuppliant Manner than uſual addreſſes himſelf to them: "I have indeed offended Jehovah your God, "in reſuſing to obey his Command, and you in breaking my Word ſo often with you; forgive me this Offence, and intreat your God to avert this Judgment, that I and my People periſh not by devouring Famine." Moses answers his Requeſt,

* *Scorching, &c.* Our Tranſlation has *East Wind*. The Vulgar has *Ventum arenarium*, a *Burning Wind*. The *Septuagint*, a *South Wind*; which Opinion I follow, (tho' the Jews will unanimouſly have it to be an *East Wind*) becauſe the South Parts of *Aſia* were moſt infeſted with Locuſts, where they are in ſome Places the chief Food of the Inhabitants; ſo that from hence by a Southerly or South-Eaſterly Wind they might eaſily be driven; for I cannot agree with ſome, that the hot Wind blowing all Day and Night produced them.

† *Locuſts*. This is the Creature which we properly call a Graſs-hopper. Wonderful are the Accounts which Authors report of theſe Kinds of Armies of Locuſts, and of the Order and Regularity of their Marches. *Aldrovandus* and *Fincelius* ſay, That in the Year of our Lord 852, they were ſeen to fly over twenty Miles in *Germany* in one Day, in manner of a formed Army, divided into ſeveral Squadrons, and having their Quarters apart when they reſted: That the

Captain marched a Day's Journey before the reſt, to chooſe the moſt opportune Places for their Camp: That they never removed till Sun riſing; at which Time they went away in as much Order as an Army of Men could do: That at laſt having done great Miſchief whereſoever they paſſ'd, after Prayers made to God, they were driven by a violent Wind into the *Belgick Ocean*, and there drowned; but being caſt again by the Sea upon the Shore, cauſed a great Peſtilence in the Country. Some add, that they cover'd an hundred and forty Acres of Land at a Time. *St. Jerome* upon *Joel* ſpeaks thus: "When the Armies of Locuſts came lately into theſe Parts, and filled all the Air, they flew in ſo great Order, that Slates in a Pavement cannot be laid more regularly, neither did they ſtir one Inch out of their Ranks." There are reckon'd thirty ſeveral Sorts of Locuſts by *Pliny*, and (if we may believe him) ſome of three Foot long. See *L. 11. c. 29.*

and immediately retiring, prayed to God, who by a strong Westerly Wind drove the Locusts into the ² Red Sea.

This Plague thus removed, *Pharaoh* returns to his former Obstinacy and Contempt of God's Commands, and refuses to let the *Israelites* go. Wherefore God bids *Moses* stretch forth his Hand towards Heaven, that there might be a Darkness over the Land of *Egypt*, so thick that it might be ² felt. *Moses* obeys the heavenly Command, and immediately from the Caverns of eternal Night such solid Clouds of Darkness invaded the Sky, that Nature all at once seem'd to be involv'd in one dreadful Eclipse; the Sun no longer encouraged the lower World with his chearful Beams; the Moon, with the Stars, her gawdy Sanhedrim of borrow'd Light, no more illuminate the darken'd Air; and all Things put on the dismal Aspect of Death, as if Nature were returning to her original Chaos. This Scene of Horror lasted for three Days, which so affected the haughty King, that though he had long stood unmoveable against the Threatnings and Judgments of God; yet now fearing an universal Dissolution, and

² Red Sea. Various are the Opinions of Interpreters about the Epithet *Red* given to this Sea. Some will have it so called from the Reflection of the Sun upon it from the Red Mountains near it. Others, that it is naturally *Red* of it self. *Pliny*, lib. 6. cap. 23. says it is called by the *Greeks*, *Erythreum Mare*, or *Red Sea*, from *Erythra* the King, and Son of *Persus*, whose Sepulchre is reported to be in *Tirina*, an Island of the *Red Sea*. Others are of Opinion, that it is called so from the *Red Sand* or *Coral*, with which this Sea abounds; and this they confirm from *Pliny*, who, l. 32. c. 2. owns that it abounds in *Coral*. But whatever the Versions render it, it's certain the *Hebrew* Word *Suph* signifies a Bound, and it is by them called the *Sea of the Bound*, because of the Boundaries between *Arabia* and the *Holy Land*, not far distant from it. The Word *Suph* always signifies a *Storm*, and thence it is also called the *Stormy Sea*. It likewise signifies *Sedge*,

or a *Rush*, and thence called the *Sedge* or *Rushy Sea*. See the Note on the next Letter.

² Felt. So the *Septuagint* and most Translations render it. Some will have this to be a Hyperbolical Expression, to set forth the Excess of this Plague: Tho' whether this Darkness was really in the Air, or only in their Eyes, which might be blinded for a Time; or whether a Suspension of Light from the Act of Illumination in that Country; or whether it were from a black, thick and damp Vapour, which possess'd all the Air, it is impossible to determine. I fancy that the Darkness of Hell below, which is called *Utter Darkness*, arose and overshadowed the Land; and for this I am authorized by the *Wisdom of Solomon*, xvii. 13. where he calls it a Night that came upon them out of the *Dungeon of Hell*; and therefore was the more proper to be (as he says after) an Image of that Darkness which should afterwards receive them.

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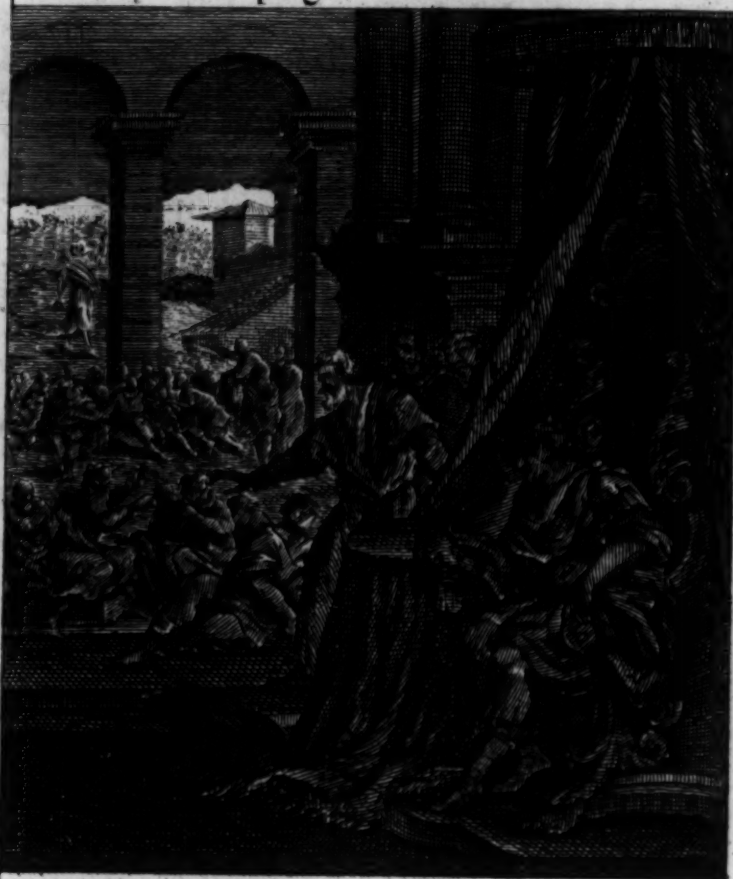
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EXODUS CHAP. X.
The plague of Darkneſs.

33



EXODUS 10. Verſe 22.

*Moses ſtreiched forth his hand toward
heaven, and there was a thick darkneſs
in all the land of Egypt three days.*

181.

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frighted at the continual ^b Terrors of this long Night, he begins to give Way, and calling for *Moses*, he says to him, "Ye may go with your little ones and serve the Lord; but for my Security, I will have you leave your Flocks and Herds behind you." This was a poor Advance more than what he had before offer'd, and which *Moses* peremptorily rejects; assuring him, that it was the express Command of their God to remove with all their Substance, and that they knew not in what Manner they were to offer Sacrifice to their God, till they came to the Wilderness. This Proposal so offended *Pharaoh*, that in great Displeasure and Impatience he commands him to be gone; and assures him, that if he ever again appear before him, it should cost him his Life. *Moses* takes him at his Word, and promises never more to see his Face; but before he left the Presence, he denounces this Judgment to him: "Thus saith the Lord, about Midnight will I enter *Egypt*, and all the First-born of the Land shall die, from the First-born of *Pharaoh* that should succeed him in the Throne, to the First-born of the Servant in the Mill; and all the First-born of Beasts shall die." And to possess *Pharaoh* and his Subjects with the greater Fear of this Judgment, he told them, there should be such great Lamentation thro' all *Egypt* as never was known before: And to convince them of his Care and Indulgence of his own People, he tells the *Egyptians*, that not the least Harm should befall the *Israelites*. And though the King still bids him Defiance, to let him see he despised his Threats, he tells him, he will so humble his Subjects with the succeeding Plague, that even his Counsellors and prime Ministers of State should come and fall down at his Feet, and intreat him and the *Israelites* to be gone:

^b Terrors. It is the Opinion of several, that during this three Days Darkness the *Egyptians* were frightened with terrible Visions and Spectres; which Opinion is very much Strengthen'd by *Wisdom*

xvii. 6, 14. and *Psalms* lxxviii. 50. Undoubtedly from such unusual Darkness they thought the whole Order of the World to be overset and dissolv'd.

And after that, said *Moses*, I will go out. Having thus deliver'd his last Message to the King of *Egypt*, with a more than usual Warmth of Zeal, he took his Leave.

The *Israelites*, during their long and grievous Bondage were Possessors of no great Wealth, their tyrannical Masters, do doubt, taking Care to keep them bare enough; therefore God, to incourage *Moses* to support them in their Deliverance, promises them Favour in the Eyes of the *Egyptians*, with Instruction to borrow of them the most valuable Things they had.

It was on the fourteenth Day of the first ^c Month that *Moses* took his Leave of *Pharaoh*: And God, having predetermined his People's Deliverance at that Time, had instituted the Passover some Days before, and given Direction to *Moses* how it should be observ'd; which was after this Manner. Every Family of *Israel* (or if the Family was too little, two neighbouring Families joining together) was on the tenth Day of this Month to take a Lamb, or Kid, and shut it up till the fourteenth Day of this Month; and then it was to be killed. The Lamb or Kid must be a Male of the first Year, and without Blemish: [A Type of Christ, who was perfectly innocent.] When it was killed, they were to take a Bunch of Hyssop, and dipping it in the Blood, (which for that End was preserved in a Vessel) they were to wipe the upper Door-post, and the Side-posts of the outer Door of every House where they did eat it, and they were not to stir

^c Month. The *Israelites*, till they had been Captives in *Babylon*, which was about eight hundred Years after they came out of *Egypt*, counted their Months without any Name, according to their Number, the First, Second, Third Month, &c. And before their coming out of *Egypt*, they began their Year in that Month, which was afterwards called *Tifri*, (which took in Part of the seventh and Part of the eighth Month with us) and they continued always after to begin their Year with that Month for Civil Affairs. According to which Computation, that

Month, which was afterwards called *Nisan*, in which God delivered *Israel* out of *Egypt*, was their seventh. But in Honour of that great Work, God appointed (*Exod. xii. 2.*) that this should be the Beginning of Months, the first Month in the Year to them: That is, with respect to their most solemn Feasts, and religious Affairs; (as for their Policies they reckon'd from *September*.) And this *Nisan* answers to Part of those two Months, which from the *Heathen Romans* are commonly called *March* and *April*. See *Godwin*, l. 3. c. 1.

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out of the House till the next Morning. This was done to the Intent, that when the Angel of the Lord should go from House to House through all *Egypt*, to slay the First-born of both Man and Beast of the *Egyptians*, he, seeing the Blood smeared on the Door-posts, might pass over those Houses, wherein the *Israelites* were eating the Lamb or Kid, without doing them any Hurt: And from the Angel's thus passing over their Houses, this Institution was called the Passover. The Lamb or Kid was to be eaten neither raw nor sodden, but roasted with Fire, and to be dress'd whole, nor might a Bone of it be broken. It was to be eaten with unleavened Bread, and with bitter Herbs, in Memory of the severe Bondage they had undergone in *Egypt*. If there remained more than could be eaten, it was to be burnt; and no Stranger might eat of it, unless he was circumcised. As to the Manner of eating it, at this Time only, they were to eat it as in haste, with their Cloaths on, and their Staves in their Hands: Which Ceremony shew'd their eager Desire of Deliverance, and their Readiness for it.

All Things thus prepared for their Departure, at Midnight the ^d Lord smote all the First-born in the Land of *Egypt*, from the First-born of *Pharaoh*, to the First-born of the ^e Captive that was in the Dun-

^d Lord. Some think God inflicted this Plague upon the *Egyptians* immediately himself; because he says, *Exod. xi. 14. About Midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt.* And to the same Effect, *Ch. xii. 12.* But it is an ordinary Manner of Speech to attribute that to God, which is done by one of his Angels; and that this was an Angel, appears out of *Ch. xii. 23. The Lord will pass over the Door, and will not suffer the Destroyer to come into your Houses to smite you.* From which Place, and *Psal. lxxviii. 49.* where it is said of the *Egyptians*, *He cast his Wrath, upon them by sending evil Angels among them;* some collect, that God used here the Ministry of an evil Angel: But it cannot be supposed, that God and the Magicians had the same Agents; and that Text of the Psalm is perhaps ill translated. *Junius and Tremellius* understand by

it *Moses and Aaron*, as Messengers of Evil; and if we interpret it (as others) of Angels, it were better render'd in *English*, *Destroying or Punishing Angels*, Inflicters of Evil upon them. I attribute this Infliction to the *Archangel Michael*: First, because it was he by Name, who fought with the *Dragon*, and smote him and his Angels, *Rev. xii. 17.* Secondly, because in *Daniel x. 13.* he is mentioned as an Angel of War. And lastly, because the very Name is said to signify, *the smiting of God.* Besides, the *Wisdom of Solomon*, *Ch. xviii. v. 14, 15, 16.* gives the same Hint.

^e Captive. That is, those meaner Servants, that are put to grinding, as *Samson* afterwards was, when he had lost at once both his Eyes and Liberty, *Judges xvi. 21.*

geon; and all the First-born of the Cattle were smitten, as the Lord had that Morning denounced to *Pharaoh* and *Moses*. The infidel King and his frightened Subjects now believe the God of *Israel* to be in earnest with them; they awake each other with their dismal Cries, and the Horror of the Night adds to their Confusion; the expiring Groans of their beloved First-born deeply affect them, and they expect a Succession of Death upon themselves: Which *Pharaoh* hoping to avert, in haste sends for *Moses* and *Aaron*, and commands them to be gone with all Speed. "Get you forth," says he, from among my People, both you and the Children of *Israel*, and go serve your God as ye have said; and take your Flocks and your Herds, as ye demanded, and be gone: I'll stand no longer on Terms with you, only pray for me, that this Plague may go no further." Nor were the People less importunate for them to be gone; for they concluded, if the *Israelites* tarried any longer among them, that they should all die.

Moses having by God's express^f Command directed the Children of *Israel* to borrow of their *Egyptian* Neighbours Jewels of Silver and Gold, and the Lord having disposed the *Egyptians* to lend them what they asked for, they by these Means^g spoiled the *Egyptians* of their most valuable Things: Nay, so urgent were they to have the *Israelites* gone, that they forced them away, not suffering them to finish their Bread, but obliging them to tie up their Dough in Cloths, and carry it away at their Backs unbaked. Thus after *Egypt* was in a Manner destroy'd, and the *Egyptians* of all Ranks had suffer'd so deeply for detaining the *Israelites*, they now on a sudden thrust them out, as God had^h foretold, and drove them away in haste.

^f Command. See *Exod.* xi. 2, 3.

^g Spoiled. This was not to be drawn into an Example, how excusable and justifiable soever in the *Israelites*, on the Account that God, who is the Sovereign Lord of all, both Persons and Things,

did so order it; and that it might be look'd on as a just Retribution for the many and great Injuries done by the *Egyptians* to the *Israelites*.

^h Foretold. See *Exod.* xi. 1.

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EXODUS CHAP. XII.

34

The death of the first born in Egypt.



EXODUS 12. Verse 29.

*And it came to pass, that at mid-
night, the Lord smote all y^e first born
in the land of Egypt etc.*

184

From the first birth of the Church until the
time of the first Council of Nicaea, which was
held in the year of our Lord 325, and the
Council of Constantinople, which was held in the
year of our Lord 381, and the Council of Ephesus,
which was held in the year of our Lord 431, and
the Council of Chalcedon, which was held in the
year of our Lord 451.

The first Council of Nicaea was held in the
year of our Lord 325, and the Council of
Constantinople was held in the year of our Lord
381, and the Council of Ephesus was held in the
year of our Lord 431, and the Council of
Chalcedon was held in the year of our Lord 451.



The first Council of Nicaea was held in the
year of our Lord 325, and the Council of
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Notwithstanding which, *Moses* did not forget to take the Bones of ⁱ *Joseph*, which he, dying in the Faith of their Deliverance, had solemnly ingaged the Children of *Israel* to ^k carry up out of *Egypt* with them, and which had now lain incoffin'd there more than a hundred and forty Years.

The Place of general Rendezvous for the *Israelites* was ^l *Ramese*, the chief City of *Goshen*; from whence on the fifteenth Day of their ^m first Month they set forward as regularly as a well ordered Army, being in Number about six hundred thousand Men, besides Children, and marched to *Succoth*. With them went a mix'd Multitude that were not *Israelites*, but Strangers of several Nations, who having seen the Calamities that *Egypt* had suffer'd for *Israel's* sake, chose rather to seek their Fortunes with the *Israelites*, than tarry in a Country almost made desolate.

And now whilst their Deliverance was fresh in their Memory, God by *Moses* commanded the People of *Israel*, that when they should be brought into the Land of *Canaan*, they should set apart, and devote unto the Lord their First-born both of Man and Beast, in ⁿ Remembrance that God for their sakes had slain all the First-born in *Egypt*.

The

ⁱ *Joseph*. *Exod.* xiii. 19.

^k Carry. *Gen.* i. 25.

^l *Ramese*. *Exod.* xii. 37.

^m *First Month*. This was afterwards called *Nisan* and *Abib*, which takes in Part of the first, and Part of the second Month with us.

ⁿ *Remembrance*. This Remembrance is twice express'd in the thirteenth of *Exod.* v. 9, 16. and undoubtedly cannot be taken in a literal Sense. The *Jews* indeed, and those that are for translating all according to the Letter, have fallen into such ridiculous Fopperies, as excite the Scorn or Compassion of all, who are but Masters of the least Reason. *St. Jerom* observes, that the Superstition of their *Phylacteries* owes its Rise to their having taken literally the Commandments which God had given them in *Exod.* xiii. 9, 16.

to bind his Laws for a Sign on their Hands, and to have them as Frontlets before their Eyes; that is, to obey them and keep them in Remembrance, or as the Margin in our *English* Version, Thou shalt have a continual Remembrance thereof, as of a Thing that is in thy Hand, or before thy Eyes. But the literal Translation which the Pharisees (who on other Occasions were too much given to Allegories) have put on the Words, have made them believe, that they contained an express Precept of Writing on a Piece of Parchment, with a great deal of Formality and Ceremony; and according to the literal Version of the Text, used to bind them to their Forehead and left Arm with great Devotion; so that those who carried them most frequently were look'd upon as most religious, tho'

The *Israelites* being to dislodge from *Succoth*, the Lord for their Incouragement and Security went before them in the Day-time in a Pillar of Cloud, and by Night in a Pillar of Fire, to direct and guide them; and the *Philistines* Country was the nearest for them to pass; yet lest they, seeing the *Philistines* with an armed Force oppose their Passage, should repent of their Deliverance, and wilfully turn back to *Egypt*, he led them about thro' the Way of the Wilderness of the *Red-Sea*, and marching to *Etham*, they incamped there on the Borders of the Wilderness, which took its Name from that Place. From thence drawing them down more to the *Red-Sea*, he caused them to incamp there, between the Straits of the Mountains in Sight of the Sea. This God did to intice *Pharaoh* to pursue them from the Prospect he might have of Advantage from the Place, where he might see them inclos'd on all Sides, without any Possibility of escaping. This was the divine Stratagem, that the Almighty *Jehovah* might more fully triumph over the *Egyptian* Tyrant: For he had told *Moses*, that *Pharaoh* would say, They were intangled in the Wilderness; and that he would harden *Pharaoh's* Heart, that he should pursue them, and be destroy'd. Which succeeded accordingly; for after the *Egyptians* had buried their dead First-born, *Pharaoh* being told that the *Israelites* were gone, and concluding from their long and speedy Marches that they did fly indeed, repented that he had let them go: His Bounty in dismissing the enslaved *Israelites* scarce survives his Deliverance from the Angel's slaughtering Hand, and Rage and Revenge succeed to his

at the Bottom there is nothing more superstitious and ridiculous. Now in this Place God cannot be supposed to mean any Thing of these Superstitions: For he does not speak of the Decalogue, which the Law of the *Jews* used to wear in their *Phylacteries*, but of the Precept of the *Passover* and *Unleavened Bread*, which God commanded them to remember, and that it might for

ever be observ'd by them, as if it were pendulous, or hanging before their Eyes. The *Septuagint* render this an *immovable Sign* or *Monument*; which cannot be supposed to be material *Phylacteries*, but a Token or Hint to put them in Mind of their Gratitude to Almighty God for their Deliverance.

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late Fear and Grief for the Death of the First-born : He forgets the Almighty Power that by a Succession of Plagues had so lately afflicted him and his People, and regardless of the Danger of provoking it again, blindly pursues his own Fate, instead of the *Israelites*.

With all the Force that he could so suddenly raise, he put himself upon the Pursuit, in order to reduce them to his Subjection again. He had with him six hundred chosen ^o Chariots, and all the Chariots of *Egypt* besides, that could be got ready at so short a Warning, with their Commanders, and ^p Horsemen ; with which he pursued them, and on the sixth Day after their Departure out of *Egypt* he came up with them, and found them incamped by the Sea ; so that as he had proposed to himself, he found the *Israelites* beset on all Sides, the Sea in Front, huge Mountains on their Flank, and his own Army in their Rear. The Sight of this Army, and their old Oppressor at the Head of them, struck Terror into the poor *Israelites* ; who soon forgetting their new-gotten Liberty betray a servile Mind, and envy the slavish Condition they but lately deplored. They reproach *Moses* as the Author of all their imaginary Woes, and wish to resume the Yoke they had but now shaken off : Long Custom had inured them to the State of Slavery, and continual Servitude of Body imbas'd their Spirits. But pious *Moses*, not resenting their reproachful Taunts, but pitying their abject Fear, cheers them up with the Assurance of God's Protection and Care : " The Lord, saith he, will fight for you, and compleat your " Deliverance ; and this numerous Army of the *Egypt-* " *tians*, which now terrifies you, shall no more af- " fright or molest you." *Moses* before this encourag-

^o Chariots. These are the first Chariots that were used in War ; in which it was the Custom long after for Soldiers to fight. They were armed with Scythes, and being drawn by Horses against the Enemy, they cut down all in their Way ; the Men in them using Darts and Spears,

and such like offensive Weapons, to annoy the Enemy.

^p Horsemen. *Josephus* writes, that besides these Chariots, *Pharaoh* took with him fifty thousand Horsemen and two hundred thousand Footmen.

ing Assurance had address'd himself to God, who admonish'd him no more at this Juncture to apply himself to him, but to press the murmuring *Israelites* to move forward, giving him Instructions how to secure his People, and afflict their Enemies. The sacred Rod, by which *Moses* had formerly wrought so many Miracles, still retains its Virtue, as inimitable by *Egyptian* Magick as before, but now more fatally destructive. "Lift up thy Rod, said the Lord, and stretch thy Hand over the Sea and divide it, and the Children of *Israel* shall go on dry Land ^P through the midst of the Sea; and I will harden the Hearts of the *Egyptians*, that they shall pursue them, and there will I get me Honour upon the Ruin of *Pharaoh* and his mighty Army.

And now to let the faint-hearted servile *Israelites* see, that they were Heaven's peculiar Care, the Angel of God, which went before the Camp of *Israel* in the Pillar of the Cloud, removed and went behind them; by which Means it kept the two Camps apart all Night; and the cloudy Side being next the *Egyptians*, cast a Darkness towards them; but the fiery Side, being next to the *Israelites*, gave them Light.

Israel being thus secured from the terrifying Sight of their Enemies, *Moses* waves the sacred Rod over the Sea, and immediately a strong East-Wind blew and drove the Sea back from the Land, and dividing the Waters, made a dry and safe Passage for the *Israelites*, who, under the Conduct of their great Guide, enter the sandy Plain, and with Amazement beheld the (till then) secret Wonders of the Deep: Wall'd

^P *Through*. That the *Israelites* went not directly cross the Sea from Shore to Shore, but took a semicircular Compass in the Sea, (according as the Waters were cast up for them) and return'd to Shore on the same Side, is the Opinion of many learned Men, both ancient and modern. And indeed their going out of the Wilderness of *Etham* into the Sea,

(as it appears they did, *Exod. xiii. 20.* compared with *Ch. xiv. v. 2.*) and their coming out of the Sea into the Wilderness of *Etham* again, (as it is plain they did, and went three Days Journey in the Wilderness of *Etham*, after they came out at the Sea, *Numb. xxxiii. 8.*) gives much Countenance to that Opinion.

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with the Floods, they boldly march on, and instead of being terrified with the Sight of a pursuing Enemy, are entertain'd with the pleasing View of the Sea's old Spoils, and the Treasures of the divided Main. The *Egyptians* blind with Fury and Revenge pursue the Tract, and not suspecting but that they with their Chariots and Horsemen might safely follow where the *Israelites* being but Footmen went before, enter in after them to the midst of the Sea. But when in the Morning ^a Watch the Lord had look'd through the Pillar of Fire and Cloud upon the *Egyptians*, and throwing their Chariots off the Wheels, had disorder'd their Army, the *Egyptians* saw their Error, and said one to another, "Let us fly from the Face of *Israel*, for "*Jehovah* fighteth for them against us." But it was now too late to fly; for *Moses* at God's Command waving the sacred Wand again, the Sea returns to its Strength. The liquid Troops on both Sides take the Signal, and at once uniting cover the thirsty Bottom, whilst Horror and Confusion invade the frightened *Egyptians*: They hear and see the roaring Waves break loose from their invisible Chain, and with helpless Speed endeavour to avoid their relentless Fury; but in vain: The mighty God of *Jacob* will revenge himself on the obstinate Infidels, and their Ruin shall be a lasting Monument of his Justice and Vengeance. Thus did the Lord rescue the *Israelites* from the King of *Egypt* and his mighty Army; which being cast on the Shore, was a delightful Spectacle to the *Israelites*, and a Confirmation of the Power of their Almighty God, who had deliver'd them (as the *Egyptians* poorly imagined) from inevitable Ruin. This created an awful Reverence in them, not only to God himself, but to his Servant *Moses*, their happy Guide, and by whose Hand God had wrought so many Wonders for their Preservation and Safety.

^a Watch. This is reckon'd to begin at the third, and reach to the sixth Hour in the Morning.

Being now safely got to Shore again, *Moses* and the *Israelites* in grateful Acknowledgment of their Deliverance sung a triumphant * Song; in which *Miriam* the Prophetess, Sister to *Moses* and *Aaron*, joined, taking a Timbrel in her Hand, and follow'd by the *Israelitish* Women with Timbrels and Dances, answer'd the Men, repeating alternately some Parts of the Song.

MOSES'S SONG.

*The Lord's Triumphant Name let all rehearse,
Praise the dread Maker of the Universe!*

*The Horse, whom rich Caparisons adorn,
Proud Riders by the generous Coursers born,
At once have slept their everlasting Sleep,
At once lie bury'd in th' Arabian Deep.*

*Great God of War! We will thy Works proclaim,
Thy wondrous Works! Jehovah is thy Name.
Our Saviour Thou, our Strength, our Song, our Praise,
Our Father's God, thy glorious Name we'll raise.
For Thee a stately Temple we'll prepare,
Deep as the Centre, tow'ring as the Air.*

*Thus said th' insulting Foe — I will pursue,
My Sword, my thirsty Sword in Blood imbrue:
The Winds of God blew terrible and loud,
The Sea the Signal takes, and overwhelms the Proud.
Like Stones, like Lead they sink, they all expire
Like Stubble in thy Wrath's consuming Fire.
The Waters saw, thy Voice the Waters bear,
Forget their Nature, and in Heaps congeal with Fear.
Convulsions cleave the Seas int' horrid Caves,
And shew a new Abyss beneath the Waves.*

* Song. This Song is set down in Honour to be joined to the Song of the
Exod. xv. from v. 1. to 20. and which *Lamb.*
in the *Revelations*, *Ch. xv.* v. 3. has the

Great God of Israel ! What vain Idol dare
 With Thee th' Eternal Lord of Hosts compare ?
 Thy Glory shall thy ransom'd Saints express,
 Obedient Nature does thy Pow'r confess,
 And Thee with Faces veil'd the dazzled Angels bless.

Thus the Song of Thanksgiving and Praise being finish'd, *Moses* led the Children of *Israel* from the *Red-Sea* into the Desert of *Shur* or *Etham*, in which they marched three Days without finding any Water; which to so great a Number of People, in so hot a Country and Season, must needs be very irksome. But at length they came to a Place where there was Water enough, but so bitter, that they could not drink of it. This Disappointment inflamed their Thirst, and increased their Dissatisfaction : And tho' it was but three or four Days since they so joyfully and thankfully praised God for their Deliverance from the Oppressions of the *Egyptians*, yet they murmured against *Moses*, asking him what they should drink. *Moses* was sensible of the Calamity under which they laboured; and fearing they should by their further Murmurings provoke the Lord to punish them as they deserved, he straightway addresses himself to him in their Behalf; who no sooner hears the Complaint, but redresses it, directing *Moses* to a Tree, which when he had cast into the Waters, they became sweet, and the People satisfied their Thirst.

^r *Red-Sea*. This Sea hath generally been held to have taken the Name from the Colour of the Sands tincturing the Water with Redness, or from the Reeds, or Rushes growing therein of a red Colour. Dr. *Gell*, in his Essay towards an Amendment of the last Translation of the Bible into English, p. 219. having said that it was long believ'd to have had that Name from *Erythras*, *Erythrus*, or *Erythraus*, a supposed King of the Land near unto it,

tells us, the Truth of the Story was, that this *Erythras* was *Esan*, who was called *Edom*, and in Greek *Erythros*, which signifies Red. Which Name *Esan* had; because he came out of his Mother's Womb Red, and was confirmed to him from his insatiable Appetite after *Jacob's* red Potage.

^r *Bitter*. From the Bitterness of the Waters, the Place took the Name of *Mara*, which signifies Bitterness.

God

God having thus miraculously supplied their Necessity, it might reasonably be supposed, they had sufficient Cause to depend upon his Providence, and never more question his Care of them: But their Faith scarcely survives his Miracles. From *Marah* they marched to *Elim*, where they found better Accommodations; for there were twelve Wells of Water, and seventy Palms, or Date-trees. Here it may be supposed they made some stay: For when they removed from hence, and came to the Wilderness of *Sin*, which is between *Elim* and *Sinai*, it was the fifteenth Day of the second Month, which was just a Month from the Day on which they set forward out of *Egypt*. And here again it was that the *Israelites* fell into a general Mutiny against *Moses* and *Aaron*: The Sight of a barren Wilderness, and Shortness of Provisions made them distrust God, and break into very indecent Expressions. "Would to God (cry'd they in their Discontent) we had died by the Hand of the Lord in the Land of *Egypt*, where we had Plenty of Bread and Meat; for now ye have brought us into this Desert, where we must perish with Famine." This ingrateful Treatment of his Servants the Lord resented as done to himself, and of which *Moses* and *Aaron* made them sensible. "Your Murmurings, said they, are not only against us, but against the Lord; who hath heard them, and e'er long ye shall know, that it was the Lord that brought you out of *Egypt*; whose Arm is not shorten'd, but can make a Provision for you as miraculous as your Deliverance."

The Lord therefore, to awe this murmuring People into a Belief of his Power and Providence, having first shewed his Glory in the Cloud, told them by *Moses*, that at Even they should eat Flesh, and in the Morning be filled with Bread; which he made

^a Twelve. St. Jerome and Tertullian the twelve Apostles, and the seventy not inelegantly make these twelve Fountains or Wells of Water to be a Type of Palm-trees of the seventy Disciples of Christ.

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EXODUS CHAP. XVI.

35

Manna is sent to the children of Israel.



EXODUS 16. Verse 14.

When y^e dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon y^e face of y^e wilderness, there lay a small round thing etc.

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good, by causing Quails to come up so thick in the Evening, that they cover'd the Camp, and afforded the *Israelites* Flesh enough. And in the Morning, when the Dew was gone, there lay upon the Ground a little white round Thing, as small as the Hoar-frost, and like Coriander-seed for shape: Which when the *Israelites* saw, they wondering said one to another, ^w What is this? For they knew not what it was. But God was pleas'd by *Moses* to give them a Direction in the Gathering and Use of it. First, it was to be gather'd fresh ^x every Morning; all that was gather'd was to be spent the same Day. And when some of them, either out of Curiosity or Diffidence, that they might have a Reserve, kept some of it till the next Morning, it putrified and stunk. They were to gather it by Measure, according to the Number of Heads in every Family. On the seventh Day, which was the Sabbath, there was none to be found; therefore they were to gather a double Portion on the sixth Day, and lay it up for the seventh Day; which being kept by God's Appointment, and for that Use, did not corrupt. This was to them instead of Bread, and of this they did eat forty Years, till they arriv'd on the Borders of *Canaan*: And as a Memorial of it, that after-generations might see the Bread with which he had fed their Forefathers in the Wilderness, God appointed that an ^y Omer of this *Manna* should be put up in a Pot, and be laid up before the Lord.

^w *What, &c.* Our Translations, and some others, make *Moses* fall into a plain Contradiction in relating this Story of the *Manna*, *Exod. xvi. 15.* which they render thus; *And when the Children of Israel saw it, they said one to another it is Manna; for they wist not what it was.* But why should they have forsaken the *Septuagint*, and several Authors both ancient and modern, that have translated this Text according to the Original? *The Israelites seeing this, said one to another, What is this? For they knew not what it was.*

The Word by which they asked. [*What is this?*] was in their Language *Man*, (which signifies also *Meat ready prepared*)

and therefore it was always afterwards called *Man* or *Manna*, which was of a delicious Taste, like Wafers made with Honey.

^x *Every Morning.* This was to signify to the *Israelites*, that they should patiently depend upon God's Providence from Day to Day; in which respect it might be a Type of that heavenly Bread, which Christ taught his Disciples to pray for, *Mat. vi. 11. Give us this Day our daily Bread.*

^y *Omer.* This was the Proportion daily allowed to one Man, and is computed to contain of *English* Measure three Pints and a half, and a fifth Part of a Pint.

God having by his Almighty Power and secret Wisdom thus plentifully provided for this murmuring People, to let them further see that they were under his more immediate Care and Protection, directs their Marches from Place to Place, and orders their Encampments. Accordingly they mov'd from the Desert of *Sin*, and incamp'd in ² *Rephidim*, where they had no Water. Here again they fell into their old Way of distrusting God's Providence, which they well knew had never hitherto failed them; and forgetting the late miraculous Supplies, they reproach *Moses* for his ill Conduct and Neglect of them. *Moses* meekly rebukes them, and cautions them not to reflect on him, for in so doing they affronted the Lord. But Thirst inflaming them, they regarded not his Cautions, and grew more mutinous, charging him with a Design of bringing them out of *Egypt*, to kill them with Thirst. These Complaints and Reproaches deeply affected *Moses*, who immediately address'd himself to God for Relief in this Distress, expostulating with him thus: "What shall I do with this People? Thirst makes them impatient, and they are ready to stone me." Considering the many Instances of God's Providence, notwithstanding their present Necessity, the *Israelites* had no Reason to distrust: However, the Lord had Compassion on *Moses*, and did also pity and bear with the People. "Give Order to the People, said he, to march; and take thy Rod, with which thou didst smite the River, and take the Elders of the People with thee, and go thou on before; and behold, I will stand before thee upon the Rock in *Horeb*, and thou shalt strike the Rock, which shall yield Water for the People to drink.

Moses did as God commanded, and in Memory of the Mutiny of the *Israelites* he named the Place *Massah* and

² *Rephidim*. *Exod.* xvii. 1. *Moses* does not here observe every Place where the *Israelites* incamped, as he doth in *Numb.*

xxxiii. but only those Places where some remarkable Thing was done.

Meribah, which signify Temptation and Strife. But before the People could move from *Rephidim*, they were put upon another Trial; for an Army of the *Amalekites* was at their Heels, and ready to attack them; *Moses* thereupon ordered *Joshua*, a valiant young Man that always attended him, to draw out a Party of choice Men against the next Morning, and to give the *Amalekites* Battle, and, said he, "I will stand on the Top of the Hill, with the Rod of God in my Hand." *Joshua* obey'd, and having drawn up his Men, *Moses* in the Morning, while the two Armies ingaged, went up to the Top of the Hill, taking *Aaron* and *Hur* with him; and holding up the Rod of God, as an Ensign in his Hand, *Israel* taking Courage from thence prevailed; but when thro' Weariness he let his Hand down, *Amalek* prevailed. Therefore *Aaron* and *Hur*, observing that *Moses's* Hands, thro' a continued waving of the Rod, were grown feeble and weary, took a Stone, and laid it under him, and standing on each Side of him held his Hands up steady till the going down of the Sun; in which Time *Joshua* routed the *Amalekite* Army, and put them to the Sword. This good Success in their first martial Enterprize very much encouraged *Joshua* and the *Israelites*; and that so remarkable an Action might be transmitted to Posterity, God commanded it to be recorded in a Book, and bid *Moses* rehearse it to *Joshua* the General to animate him to future Service; for, saith the Lord, "I will utterly put out the Remembrance of *Amalek* from under Heaven." And for a Memorial of this Victory, *Moses* built an Altar, to sacrifice thereon for it, and called it *Jehovah Nissi*; because, said he, the Lord hath sworn, that he will have War with *Amalek* from Generation to Generation.

By this Time the *Israelites* were come near the Place where God first appeared to *Moses* in the Burning Bush,

^a *Amalekites*. These were a People descended from *Amalek*, the Grandson of *Esan*. See Gen. xxxvi. 12.

^b *Jehovah Nissi*. That is, the Lord is my Banner, as he declared by holding up his Rod and his Hands.

and not far from his Father-in-Law *Jethro's* Habitation; who having heard of all that God had done for *Moses* and his People *Israel*, and understanding they were now near him, took his Daughter *Zipporah*, *Moses's* Wife, with their two Sons, *Gershom* and *Eliezer*, and brought them to him to the *Israelitish* Camp: Where, after mutual Salutations and Imbracings, *Moses* gave *Jethro* a particular Account of the Lord's dealing with *Pharaoh* and the *Egyptians* in Defence of *Israel*, and of all that had befallen them during their March thither. *Jethro* being a devout Man testified his Joy by rendring solemn Praise to God, and acknowledging his Sovereignty, offering at the same Time a Burnt-offering, and Sacrifices of Thanksgiving to God; in which *Aaron* and all the Elders of *Israel* did join with him, and feast together.

During *Jethro's* Stay in the Camp, he observ'd the great Weight of Business under which *Moses* laboured in hearing the Complaints and determining the Differences of so great a People; and therefore, being a wise and experienced Prince himself, he advised his Son-in-Law to substitute certain subordinate Officers, properly qualified, Men of Sincerity and Ability, such as feared God and hated Covetousness, to be Rulers; some over Thousands, some over Hundreds, some over Fifties, and some over Tens, who should hear and end all smaller Matters among the People, and refer the greater and more weighty Causes only to him: Assuring him, that if with God's Approbation he did follow this Advice, it would be better both for the People and himself. *Moses* approves of this Counsel, and immediately puts it in Practice, to the great Ease of himself and the People. *Jethro* seeing Things thus settled, takes his Leave of his Son-in-Law, and return'd to his own Land.

Three ^d Months after God had delivered his People from the Tyranny of the King of *Egypt*, they left *Re-*

^c Devout. *Jethro* being sprung from the Loins of *Abraham* by *Keturah* his second Wife, tho' not of the Seed of Promise, it is evident that he worshipped the true God; and therefore *Moses*

refused not to marry his Daughter.

^d Months. This was in the Beginning of the Month *Sinan*, containing part of *May* and *June*.

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phidim and incamped in the Wilderness of *Sinai* before the Mount of God. Here God called for *Moses*, who going up to it, received a Command to tell the *Israelites*, that they ought to consider the tender Love of God to them, which had so eminently and often appeared in their Deliverance and Preservation; and that tho' they had murmured and distrusted his Providence, yet if now they would be obedient and keep his Covenant, he would take them into his Protection, and that they should be his People, a Priestly Kingdom, and a Holy Nation. *Moses* having communicated this to the Elders and People, they unanimously answer'd, that whatsoever the Lord had commanded them, they would obediently perform. *Moses* return'd the People's Answer to God, who said to *Moses*, "I will come to you" in the Darkness of a Cloud, that the People may see "something of me, when I shall speak to you, and" may always believe you. Then he commanded him to direct the People to cleanse themselves, and to wash their Garments during two Days, and to be ready the third Day on which the Lord would ^e descend, in the Sight of all the People on Mount *Sinai*; that he should mark out Bounds about the Mountain, which none was to pass before the Trumpet began to sound. These were the preparatory ^f Solemnities to the Lord's giving the ^g Law; after which followed divers judicial Laws intermix'd with some Ceremonials, and backed with Promises of Blessings upon the People's Obedience.

All which *Moses* wrote in a Book, and then read it to the People; and having by God's Command brought

^e *Descend.* It must be observ'd here, and likewise in other Places of the same Nature, that the Scripture, suiting it self to Man's common Way of Speaking and Thinking, assigns such Things to God, as are only proper to the Effects. It is said that God descended on the Mountain, because he made his Presence more visible there by sensible and surprizing Effects. It may be also said, it was an Angel de-

scended from God, who spoke to *Moses*, and gave the Law; but the Text expresses, *Exod.* xix. 20. that it was God himself, who descended upon the Top of Mount *Sinai*.

^f *Solemnities.* See *Exod.* from *Ch.* xix, to xxiv.

^g *Law.* Which contained the Ten Commandments, from thence called the *Decalogue*.

up *Aaron* with his two Sons, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, and seventy of the Elders of *Israel*, so near that they saw the Divine Majesty, yet they were not smitten by it, but surviv'd the Sight.

The next Time *Moses* went up to the *Mountain*,^b which was likewise then at the Command of God, he took none with him but *Joshua*, directing the Elders to tarry for them till they should return, and referring them to *Aaron* and *Hur* for Assistance and Advice in any difficult Case, that might be brought before them. *Moses* was no sooner got up to the Mountain of God but a Cloud covered the Mount, and the Glory of the Lord abode upon it like a devouring Fire, in the Sight of the Children of *Israel*. The seventh Day God called *Moses* from the midst of the Fire, and he entred the midst of the Cloud, and went further up the Mount, and remained there forty Days and as many Nights. During which Time he received the Tables of Stone, wherein God himself had written the Law; and was instructed by God how the Tent or Tabernacle should be made, wherein he should be worshipped. He likewise describ'd the Sanctuary, the Table for the Shew-bread, the Altar of Frankincense, the Altar for the Burnt-offerings, the Court of the Tabernacle, the Bason to wash in, the Ark, the Candlestick, the Priestly Vestments, and taught him how the Priests were to be consecrated, what part of the Offering they were to take, and how the perpetual Sacrifice was to be offered. God likewise pitched upon the very Men to undertake the Building, *Bezaleel* of the Tribe of *Judah*, and *Aboliab* of the Tribe of *Dan*. In fine, he recommended the keeping of the Sabbath, and having ended theⁱ Discourse, gave *Moses* two Stone Tables, containing his Covenant or Law, which were written by the Hand of God.

Whilst *Moses* was conversing with God upon the Mount, and *Joshua* dutifully waiting his Return, the

^b Which. See *Exod.* xxiv. 12.

ⁱ Discourse. See the Particulars from Chapter of *Exodus*.

the twenty third to the thirty second

People in the Camp growing impatient of his long Absence tumultuously repair to *Aaron*, and, as if they despair'd of God's Protection, because he did not continually work Miracles to convince them, they concluded *Moses* had deserted them; and therefore demanded of *Aaron* to make them Gods to go before them. *Aaron*, who should have restrained them from this Madness, too easily complied, and for want of reproving and expostulating with them the Unreasonableness of their wild Desire, contributed to their Idolatry; and, as if he had a Mind to forward them in this wicked Intention, he bid them break off the golden ^kRings, which were in the Ears of their Wives and Children, and bring them to him. Which when he had received he tied in a Bag, and made a molten ^lCalf of them. Which being

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^k Rings. These probably were the same, which they had borrowed of the Egyptians, *Exod.* ⁱ 35.

^l Calf. The Reason why they worshipped God rather in the Similitude of a Calf, than of any other Creature, is generally by Expositors, conceived to be from the corruptions they had learned among the Egyptians, (who worshipped their Idol *Apis* or *Serapis* in a living Ox, and likewise in an Image made in the Form and Similitude of an Ox with a Bushel on his Head) in Memory, as some say, of *Pharaoh's* Dreams, and *Joseph's* Providence, who measured out the Corn to the People in that extrem Dearth. Concerning the Sin of the Israelites in making this Calf or Ox, the modern Jews transfer the Fault upon certain Proselyte Egyptians, who came out with them; and they say, that when *Aaron* cast their Jewels into the Fire, those Egyptians, contrary to his Expectation, by their Art Magick produced a Calf, to which Purpose they urge *Aaron's* own Words, *Exod.* xxxii. 24. *I did cast the Gold into the Fire, and thereof came this Calf;* as if his Art or Will went not with the making thereof, but that of it self it made it self. Which Answer of his rather shews how vain the Wit of Man is in the Excuse of Sin.

In this very Text, viz. *Exod.* xxxii. 4. where Mention is made of the molten

Calf, there seems to be a very great Mistake by most Versions, even in the LXX. and overseen by the Expositors and Criticks. The Geneva Version says, that *Aaron*, having received the Ear-rings from the Israelites, fashioned them with a graving Tool, and made a molten Calf of them, as if the Calf had been ingraven, before it was molten. Our Translation, to avoid this Absurdity, renders, he fashioned it with a graving Tool after he had made it a molten Calf; but both seem to be mistaken in thinking that the golden Calf was ingraven. For who taught *Aaron* to ingrave? Or how could it be ingraven so soon, since *Aaron* presented it to the People on the Morrow? And if the Custom of ingrating molten Work was then known, how comes it to pass that the Scripture, which speaks about thirty Times of it, mentions nothing of their Ingraving, even in *Solomon's* Time, since it may be presumed, that the Furniture of *Solomon's* Temple was wrought with much more Art than the Figure of *Aaron's* Calf? The Occasion of the Mistake seems to be the Ambiguity of the Hebrew Word *Tfour*, which sometimes signifies to fashion, but signifies likewise to bind or tie, and of the Word *Chareth*, which signifies a graving Tool, and sometimes a Sack or Bag, 2 Kings v. 23. But the Nature and Circumstances of the Thing, which is here spoken of, might have

ing done, they own'd it for their God, saying, *This is thy God, O Israel, that brought thee out of the Land of Egypt.* Aaron seeing the People so much delighted with their golden God, as if he were possess'd with the same idolatrous Spirit, built an Altar before it, and proclaim'd a Feast to be holden the next Day to the Lord. And indeed the People did make a revelling Feast of it; for after they had made their Oblations and Peace-offerings, they sat down to eat and drink, and spent the whole Day in Feasting and Pleasure.

Moses was still in the Mount conversing with his God, whilst the wanton *Israelites* were revelling in the Camp, little suspecting so sudden a Change in a People who had so lately and solemnly entred into a Covenant of Obedience to all that God should command. But he, from whom no Secret can be hid, is instantly appris'd of this sudden Revolt; therefore telling *Moses* what Crime the People had committed, he expresses his Indignation against their Rebellion and Ingratitude. "Go down, saith he, for ^m thy People whom thou broughtest out of *Egypt* have corrupted themselves. I know them to be an obstinate People in many Instances, therefore intercede not for them, but see me express my Resentments in the Destruction of them; and to thee will I transfer the Blessings I intended to them, and of thee will I make a great Nation." But notwithstanding the *Israelites* frequent Rebellions against God, and tumultuous Mutinies against him, *Moses* is so far from seeking his own Interest by their Destruction, that he interposes with his Prayers; and with his importunate Intreaties so appeas'd the Lord, that he desisted from their Destruction.

Moses having deprecated the Anger of God hasten'd down from the Mount, and took *Joshua* with him, who

have made them understand, that the Words should have been render'd, *And he received them at their Hands, and tied them in a Bag, and made a molten Calf of them.*

^m *Thy, &c.* By this Expression it seems as if God disown'd them any more to be his People, and would cast them off.

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EXODUS CHAP. XXXII. ³⁶
Moses breaks the Tables.



EXODUS 32. Verse 19.

*As soon as he came nigh unto y^e camp
that he saw y^e calf, & y^e dancing, & Moses
anger waxed hot, & he cast y^e tables out*

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had, during his stay above, waited for him below. As they went, *Joshua*, hearing the Noise of the People shouting, observed to *Moses*, that there was a Noise of War in the Camp. But *Moses*, who knew the Truth of it before, reply'd, That the Noise was not like that of those which shouted for Victory, nor of those that cry'd for Quarter, but of such as rejoiced. Being come within Sight of the Camp, *Moses* spied the Calf, and the People dancing before it; which so incens'd him, that in a holy Rage at their Ingratitude and Rebellion he threw the Tables, wherein God had with his own Hand written the Law, against the Rock and brake them to Pieces: Then taking the Idol Calf, to deface it, he first threw it into the Fire and burnt it, and grinding it to Powder, he took the Powder and strewed it upon the Water; and to make them more sensible of their Folly in worshipping that as a God, which should pass through their Bodies, he made the *Israelites* drink of the Water.

After this *Moses* calls *Aaron* to account for having given way to this Sin of the People; which *Aaron* very poorly excuses by urging the mischievous Temper of the People, and that he had complied with them for Quiet-sake. *Moses* did not long reason the Case with *Aaron*; for seeing that the People by *Aaron's* Indiscretion were naked and stripp'd of the Defence and Protection which God's Presence and Favour had been to them, and that too amongst their Enemies; and to make a further Atonement for this Sin, besides that of burning the Calf, he went into the midst of the Camp, and calling out, said, "Let those who are for the Lord join themselves with me." Upon which all the Sons of *Levi*, who were not concern'd in the late Idolatry, repair'd to him, whom he order'd to arm, and go thro' the Camp, and slay all the Ring-leaders of the Sedition with their Followers: The *Levites* thus commissioned fell on; and slew about three thousand Men. For which laudable Zeal and ready Obedi-

Obedience *Moses* ⁿ blessed the Family of *Levi*, assuring them that by this shedding the Blood of their idolatrous Brethren without Favour or Distinction, they had consecrated themselves to the Lord, who would not fail to blefs them for it.

And now, tho' God was pleased to accept this Execution in part of Satisfaction for the present, yet he would not discharge the People, but threatned them, that in the Day when he should visit, he would visit them for this Sin. And he did afterwards upon fresh Provocations remember it, and added to their Punishment. After this *Moses* returning to the Lord acknowledged *Israel's* Sin, and ask'd Forgiveness for it, with that Earnestness and Concern, that he pray'd God to blot him out of his ^o Book, rather than not to pardon them. But this was inconsistent with the Divine Justice, and therefore God gave him this short answer,

ⁿ *Blessed*. This Fast did so please God, *Exod. xxxii. 27.* that he turned away the Curse of *Jacob* against *Levi*, *Gen. xlix. 7.* to a Blessing. See *Dent. xxxiii. 9.*

^o *Book*. *Exod. xxxii. 32.* It is said, that God being greatly offended with the *Israelites* for their Idolatry resolved straightway to consume them. *Moses* intercedes for them, and prays, that God would pardon them, or that he would blot him out of his Book. But what could be understood by this Book, but the Scroll, wherein all the Names of the *Israelites* that were to enter into the Land of *Canaan* were written? This way of Speaking is evidently grounded upon the numbering of the Children of *Israel* at their coming out of *Egypt*, and the registering of their Names in a Scroll or Register, as may be seen *Numb. i.* The same Method was likewise taken at the Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity, as may be seen in the Books of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*; and those, who were inrolled in this Book, are said to be written for Life, or among the Living, *Isa. iv. 3.* for every Year they blotted out of this Catalogue the Names of those who died. From hence we find in Scripture frequent mention made of the *Book of Life*, and from this several affirm, that those who

are written in it are absolutely predestinated to Salvation. But this way of Speaking can have no such Signification in Scripture; else we shall make *Moses* to desire a Thing which was impossible even to God, (who cannot be unjust) namely, that he would blot him out of the Book of Life. If *Moses* had desired to be damned, Atheists and Deists might have Reason to say, that he had made a very extravagant Demand, which look'd more like Madness than Inspiration. But Dr. *Stillingfleet*, after several others, has prov'd that he had not the least thought of Damnation. No such Thing can be found in what goes before or after; and besides the whole Design of this Chapter is quite opposite to this Sort of Thought, and runs all on temporal Punishments. And this may be gather'd from a like Prayer of *Moses* on another Occasion, where he says, *If thou deal thus with me, kill me I pray thee out of Hand, Numb. xi. 15.* The Hebrew Word also, which is render'd to blot out, signifies to kill or destroy. It is therefore evident, that to be written in the Book of Life, signifies to be under the Favour and Protection of God, and that to be blotted out of it, signifies to lose Life by a just Punishment, as most of the Learned do allow,

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" Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my Book.

God being thus in part appeased, commanded *Moses* to lead the People to the Place he had appointed; but let him know, he was not willing to go along with them, because they were a stiff-necked People, lest they should provoke him to consume them in the Way; yet, to shew he had still some Tenderness and Regard for them, he would send his Angel before them, to drive out the Inhabitants of the promised Land, that so he might perform the Oath, which he had sworn to *Abraham, Isaac and Jacob*. This was very afflict- ing News to the *Israelites*, who now plainly perceiv- ed, that God's withdrawing his immediate Presence from them was the Effect of their Rebellion; upon which they mourned, and to shew their Humiliation, they forbore to put on their Ornaments. But *Moses*, to humble them the more, and make them more sen- sible of their Sin, took a Tent, and pitching it with- out the Camp at a good Distance, called it the Taber- nacle of the Congregation: Intimating to them by this, that the Lord was so highly offended with them for their Idolatry, that he had removed from them, and would no longer dwell amongst them as he had done before: By which Means every one that sought the Lord was obliged to go to this Tabernacle with- out the Camp; and when *Moses* went to it, as he en- tred in, the cloudy Pillar, in which the Lord used to appear, descended and stood at the Door of the Ta- bernacle.

The People being thus humbled, were more careful in observing the Motions of *Moses*; and therefore when he went out of the Camp to the Tabernacle, they rose up, and stood every Man at his Tent Door looking after him, till he was gone in: And when they saw the cloudy Pillar, which they knew was a Token of God's Presence, they all worshipped. Here the Lord talked with *Moses*, and permitted *Moses* to
P talk

He talk with him very familiarly; which Favour *Moses* improved to the People's Advantage; labouring with much importunity to reconcile God to them. After which, the Lord having, at *Moses's* Request, and to encourage and comfort him, shewn him so much of his Glory, as *Moses* was capable of seeing, being overcome with this good Man's Excess of Charity, he bid him prepare two new * Tables of Stone, like the former, which he had broken, and come up himself alone with them in the Morning to Mount *Sinai*, and I, said he, will write in those Tables the Words that were in the first.

Moses accordingly rose up early in the Morning, and repair'd to Mount *Sinai* with the two Tables, where prostrating himself before the Divine Majesty, who appear'd in the Cloud on the Top of the Mount, most humbly beseeched him to pardon the Sin of his People. The Lord favourably received his Intercession, and promis'd to make a Covenant with ⁹ his

* *Talk.* *Moses's* talking familiarly with God is accommodated to Man's Capacity, which is express'd *Exod.* xxxiii. 11. to be Face to Face, as a Man speaketh to his Friend.

* *Tables of Stone.* Authors vary much in their Opinions concerning the Inventors of Letters. Some say, *Cadmus* brought the Use of them into Greece; others say, *Palamedes*. Some say, *Radamanthus* brought them into *Assyria*: *Memnon* into *Egypt*: *Hercules* into *Phrygia*, and *Carmenita* into *Latium*. Likewise some say the *Phœnicians* had the first Knowledge of them; others the *Ethiopians*, and others the *Assyrians*. But upon better Grounds it is thought by *Ensebius* in his *Præpar. Evang.* l. 18. That *Moses* first taught the Use of Letters to the *Jews*, and that the *Phœnicians* learned them from the *Jews*, and the *Grecians* from the *Phœnicians*. The Matter upon which Men wrote in ruder Times was different: Some wrote on Rinds of Trees; some on Tiles; some on Tables, which last was chiefly in Use among the *Jews*. The *Decalogue* was written on two Tables of Stone. And in *Isaiah's* Time they used Tables. *Ch.* iii. v. 8. The *Septuagint* say, *ib.* on a Box-Table; as if the Writing-

Tables were made of Box-Trees. They used not Pens or Quills, but a certain Instrument or Punch made of Iron or Steel, called *Stylus*, which was sharp at one End, for the more convenient indenting or carving the Characters; and broad at the other, for scraping out. As to the Custom of writing on Stone or Brick, it was undoubtedly very ancient. *Josphus Antiq.* l. 11. says, That *Seth* having been instructed by *Adam* in Astronomy, and understanding that the World was twice to perish, once by a Deluge, afterwards by a general Conflagration, reduc'd this Art to an Epitome, and inscribed it on two Pillars, one of Brick, against the Violence of Fire; the other of Stone against the Inundation of Water; one of which (the Pillar of Stone) he affirms to have been extant in his Time, in a Place called *Syrias* or *Seirath*, conceived by *Vossius*, *lib. de Etate Mundi*, p. 271. to be the Land bordering on Mount *Ephraim*, not far from *Jericho*.

⁹ *His People.* *Exod.* xxxiv. 10. God here calls the Children of *Israel*, *Thy People*, that is, *Moses's* People, for he would not yet call them *His*: For this Reconciliation of God's was but conditional, and in Proportion to their Obedience.

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People upon Condition they would keep his Commandments; that they would not worship the Gods of the *Canaanites*; that they would make no Alliances with the People of that Country; that they would have no strange Gods; that they would keep the Sabbath, the Passover, and other Festivals ordain'd by the Law.

Moses having continued in the Mount forty Days and forty Nights in Communion with God without Meat and Drink, return'd to the People with the two Tables of the Law: But he knew not that with God's talking with him his Face had contracted a Splendor. Wherefore *Aaron* and the *Israelites* being frighted at the Lustre of his Countenance, durst not approach him; which *Moses* perceiving, he put a Veil upon his Face, and then calling the Rulers and all the People to him, he gave them in Command all that the Lord had charg'd him with in the Mount: And from that Time so long as the Lustre lasted upon his Face, when he talked with the People he put on the Veil; but when he went in to speak to the Lord he put it off.

At this Time *Moses* acquainted the People, that it was the Lord's Will to have a Tabernacle built, and that he had commanded him to speak to them to bring in their Offerings, which were to consist of Materials, with which it was to be made. The Directions now given were the same with those when *Moses* went first up to the Mount; but, by reason of the People's Transgression in Idolizing the Calf, they

^r Law. See *Exod.* xxxiv. from v. 10. to v. 27.

^r Splendor. The Vulgar *Latin* renders *Moses's* Face *Cornuta*, or *horned*; from whence, it's probable, of old he was pictured with Horns on his Head. But the *LXX.* render it much better, *glorified*, to which the Apostle *2 Cor.* iii. 7. alludes. No doubt, by this divine Conversation *Moses's* Face was illustrated, and we may reasonably suppose that the Rays of this divine Light might terminate in Points

not unlike the taper End of a Horn. And this glorious Appearance in *Moses's* Face might be design'd by God for several Reasons. As, 1. That the People might pay him the greater Reverence and Fear. 2. To testify God's great Love and Esteem for him. 3. To terrify the *Israelites* from violating the Law. And these Beams or Rays of Light, *St. Ambrose* in *Psal.* cxviii. says, continued to *Moses* all the rest of his Life.

were not then delivered to them. This Offering was not to be exacted, but the People were to give it voluntarily; to which God so inclined them, that they soon brought in more than was requisite, so that *Moses* was obliged to cause Proclamation to be made to restrain their Liberality.

The Materials thus prepared were delivered to *Betzaleel* and *Aholiab*, two ingenious Men, and well skill'd in Architecture and all manner of Workmanship, who employed all Men and Women, that had any Skill in curious Operation. This Tabernacle was a Tent cover'd with Curtains and Skins, but much larger than the other Tents. It was divided into two Parts; the one cover'd, and properly called the Tabernacle; and the other open, call'd the Court. The cover'd part was again divided into two other parts; the one called the Holy of Holies, the Curtains of which were made of imbroidered Linen of several Colours. There were ten Curtains, twenty eight Cubits long, and four in breadth. Five Curtains together made two Coverings, which being made fast together covered all the Tabernacle. Over the rest there were two other Coverings, the one of Goats Hair, the other of Sheeps Skins. These Veils or Coverings were laid on a square Frame of Planks resting on Bases. There were forty eight large Planks, each a Cubit and a half wide, and ten Cubits high, twenty of them on each side, and six at one end to the Westward, and one at each corner: Each Plank was born on two Silver Bases, they were let into one another, and held by Bars running the length of the Planks. The East end was open, and only cover'd with a Curtain. The Holy of Holies was parted from the rest of the Tabernacle by a Curtain made fast to four Pillars, standing ten Cubits from the end. The whole length of the Tabernacle was thirty two Cubits, and the breadth twelve. The end was thirty Cubits high, the upper Curtain hung on the North
and

EXODUS CHAP. XXXIV.

37

Moses face shineth.



EXODUS 34. Verse 35.

*And the children of Israel saw the face
of Moses, that the skin of Moses face shone
and Moses put the vail upon his face etc.*

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and South sides eight Cubits, and on the East and West four Cubits.

The Court was a spot of Ground an hundred Cubits long, and fifty in breadth, inclos'd by twenty Columns, each of them twenty Cubits high, and ten in breadth, covered with Silver, and standing on Copper Bases, five Cubits distant from each other, between which there were Curtains drawn, and fastned with Hooks. At the East end was an Entrance twenty Cubits-wide, covered with a Curtain hanging loose.

The Ark was in the Sanctuary; it was a square Chest made of *Shittim*-Wood, two Cubits and a half long, and one Cubit and a half wide and deep. It was covered with Gold Plates, and had a Gold Cornish which bore the Lid. On the sides of it were Rings, to put Poles thro' to carry it. The Covering was all of Gold, and call'd the Propitiatory or Mercy-Seat. There are two Cherubims on it, which covered it with their Wings; the Tables of the Law were in the Ark, which was therefore called the Ark of the Testimony, or of the Covenant.

The Table was made of Cedar covered with Gold, two Cubits long, one in breadth, and one and a half in height. About the Edge of it was an Ornament, it stood on four Feet, and had wooden Bars plated with Gold to carry it on. They laid on it the Offering or Shew-bread, which was chang'd every Day, six Loaves at each end, with Incense over them. It was not lawful for any but the Priests to eat of that Bread.

The Candlestick was of pure Gold, had seven Branches, three on each side, and one in the middle: Each Branch had three Knobs like Apples, and three Sockets in the Shape of half Almond-shells; that in the middle had four; on each Branch was a Gold Lamp, and there were Gold Snuffers and Nippers to dress them.

There

There were two Altars, one for the Burnt-offerings five Cubits long and wide, and three in Height, with a Sort of Seraphim at each Corner. It was hollow, cover'd both within and without with Brass Plate, and open both at Top and Bottom. In the Midst of it was a Copper Grate, standing on four Feet, a Cubit and a half high, and fastned with Hooks and Rings. On it were burn'd the Wood and the Offerings. There were all Necessaries for that Service, as Kettles, Ladles, Tongs, Hooks and the rest.

The Altar of the Incense was but one Cubit in Length and Breadth, and two Cubits high. It was plated with Gold, and had a Crown of Gold over it. This Altar was in the Sanctuary with the Ark; that of the Burnt-offerings was in the Tabernacle on the North-side, on the Table opposite to it on the South-side. In the Court was a great Copper Bason on a Pillar, with several Cocks for Water to run out, for washing the Hands of those that ministred.

The Vestments of the High-Priest were the Breast-Plate, the Ephod, the Robe, the Close Coat, the Mitre and the Girdle. The Ephod, the Robe, and the Close Coat were of Linen, and covered the whole Body from the Neck to the Heels. Over all was a Purple Tunick, a Vestment larger and finer wrought, which reach'd not so low, but at the bottom of it hung Pomegranates and Bells. The Ephod consisted of two Bands made of Gold Thread, and of several Colours made fast to a Sort of Collar, which hung down before and behind on both Shoulders, and meeting serv'd for a Girdle to the Tunick or Vestment. On the Shoulders were two large precious Stones, which join'd the fore and the hind Parts of the Ephod, on which were carved the Names of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, six on each of them. The Breast-plate being of the same Workmanship, but double, was made fast with Gold Chains to the Ephod. It

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It was a square Ornament, very thick, and covering the Breast. The Girdle was the Ephod it self cross'd, or some other Band of the same Matter. The Mitre was of fine Flax; it cover'd the Head, and on the Forehead was a Gold Plate, on which were carved these Words, THE HOLINESS OF THE LORD. These were the solemn Ornaments belonging to the High-Priest; the others wore only a simple Tunick or Vestment, a Linen Mitre and a Girdle. They had all Breeches of Linen and Cotton, covering their Legs and Thighs, and reaching up to the Waste.

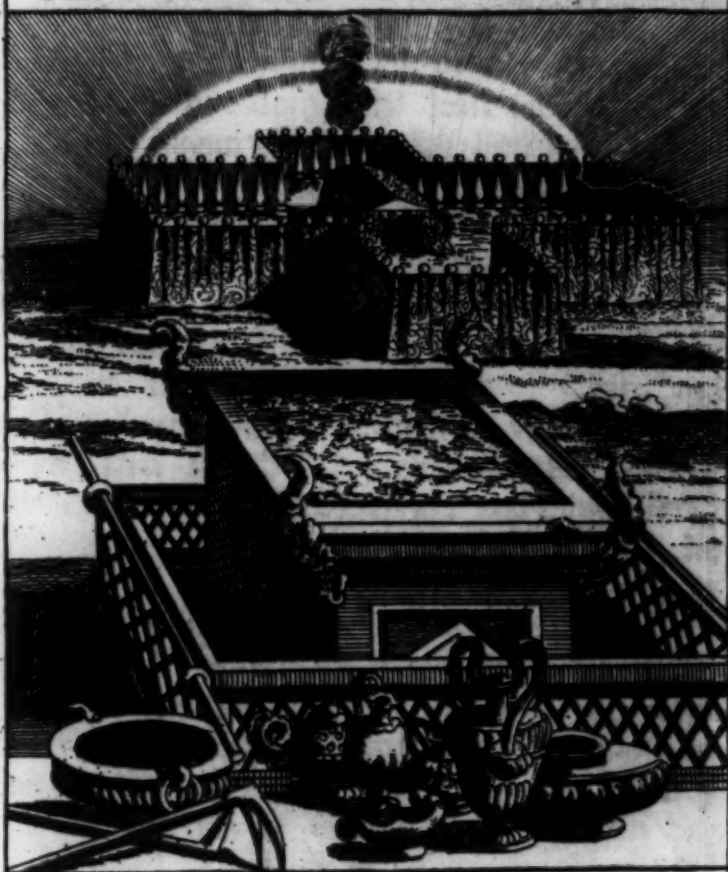
The Work being finished, and the Vestments made according to these Directions, they were brought to *Moses* for his Approbation, who having view'd them, and found that all was done as the Lord had commanded, he praised God for the People's Diligence, and pray'd for them. And now all things being ready, on the first Day of the first Month, in the second Year after their Departure from *Egypt*, the Tabernacle was by God's immediate Command set up; and all its Furniture disposed in the proper Places. Which done, the Cloud covered it, and the Glory of the Lord filled it; so that for a while *Moses* himself was not able to enter it. And this Cloud was the Signal to the People of *Israel*, by which they knew when to march, and when to rest. For when the Cloud was taken up from over the Tabernacle, the Children of *Israel* journied; but if the Cloud was not taken up, they journied not until it was.

The Tabernacle being set up, and all things prepared, God proceeded to give Direction to *Moses*, and by him to the People, in what manner his publick Worship under that Dispensation should be performed; which was by Sacrifice: And this was an Offering made to God, to acknowledge his Sovereignty over his Creatures, and to expiate Sin. Only five sorts of Creatures were appointed to be offered in Sacrifice; which were Oxen, Lambs, Goats,

Turtles and young Doves, all which were to be Males, and without Blemish. He, who presented an Offering, did it at the Altar, and laid his two Hands on the Head of the Creature, and then the Throat of it was cut within the first Tabernacle. The Blood was received in a Bason, and with it the Priest sprinkled the Vessels, and Corners of the Altar, the rest was spilt at the Foot of the Altar. The Victim was flead, cut in Pieces, and laid on the Altar, where either the whole, or some of them was burnt, according to the several sorts of Sacrifices. Libations likewise were added to the Sacrifices: All the Wine, or Flower, which were offered with the Victim, were called Effusion, or pouring out. There was a separate Offering of fine Flower and Oil, baked on an Iron, or in a Pan. These were sprinkled with Oil, and Frankincense added to them. The Sacrifices were of four Sorts: 1. The Burnt-Offering, every Part of which was consumed by Fire on the Altar, after washing the Feet and Entrails. 2. The Peace-Offering, of which only the inward Fat or Tallow was burnt on the Altar, made up with the Liver and Kidneys, and the Tails of the Lambs. The Breast and the right Shoulder belong'd to the Priests who were obliged to eat them in the Holy Place; the rest belonged to him who offered the Sacrifice. 3. The Sacrifice for Sin committed either wilfully or ignorantly; and in this the Priest took some of the Blood of the Victim, dipp'd his Finger in it, and sprinkled seven Times towards the Veil of the Sanctuary. The same Parts of the Victim were burnt on the Altar in this as in the former Sacrifice; the rest, if the Sacrifice was offered for the Sin of the High-Priest, or for the People, was carried without the Camp to be burnt there, with the Skin, the Head, the Feet and the Bowels: If it was for a private Person, the Victim was divided, as was said above, between the Priest and the Officer. 4. The Sacrifice of Oblation was either fine Flower, or Incense,

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EXODUS CHAP. XXV. 38
The Tabernacle with the Vessels thereof.



EXODUS 25. Verse 8.

*And let them make me a Sanctuary that I may dwell amongst them:
According to all that I shew thee. etc.*



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cense, or Cakes of fine Flower and Oil bak'd, or the first Fruits of new Corn: With the Things offered there were always Oil, Salt, Wine and Frankincense. All the Frankincense was cast into the Fire; but of the other Things offered, the Priest took one Part, which he also burnt, and the rest belonged to him.

The next Thing that regarded the Worship of the *Israelites* was their Festivals. The first of which was their Sabbath, which they kept very strictly, dedicating it wholly to Rest, not doing the least servile Work on that Day. It began like all other Festivals on one Evening, and ended the next. The Passover was likewise a very solemn Festival. It began the Evening of the fourteenth Day of the *March* Moon. They eat none but unleavened Bread for seven Days, and the seventh Day was another great Festival. The first Day after the Passover they offered new Ears of Corn, and from that Day they reckoned seven full Weeks or fifty Days; and that fiftieth Day was another solemn Festival, called the Harvest Festival; and they offered in Thansgiving two Loaves of new Wheat, as the first Fruits of the Harvest. The first Day of the seventh Month, which was the first of the Civil Year, published by sound of Trumpet, was also a Festival. The tenth of the same Month was kept the Feast of Expiation, and that was the Day on which the Priests went into the Sanctuary. They offer'd two Goats, one of which was a solemn Sacrifice for Sin. The High-Priest took the Blood of this, and of the Lamb kill'd in the Sanctuary, and sprinkled them; the other Goat was carried not only out of the Tabernacle, but without the Camp also, and was therefore called *Azazel*, or the Scape-Goat. On the fifteenth of the same Month began the Feast of Tabernacles, and lasted eight Days, being kept as a Memorial that the Children of *Israel* had lived in Tents. During this Feast they lived in Huts covered with Boughs of Trees, and spent those Days in

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It is the origin of P. 211

Mirth, holding Boughs in their Hands, with which they went round the Altar. Every seventh Year was dedicated to rest, for in them they neither sow'd nor reap'd; but the fiftieth Year, called the *Jubilee*, was most solemn, for then all Estates alienated return'd to those who had sold them, and Slaves recovered their Liberty.

The *Israelites* in their Eating distinguished between two Sorts of Creatures, clean and unclean; it was lawful for them to eat of the first, but not of the last. There were two Qualifications required for the reckoning of a Beast clean; which were, that it should have a cloven Hoof, and that it should chew the Cud; so that it was unlawful for them to eat Swine's Flesh, because they do not chew the Cud; or Rabbits and Hares because they have not cloven Feet, like the Ox, the Stag, the Sheep, but Toes joined by Skins. Among Fishes they were only allow'd to eat such as had Fins and Scales. All Birds of Prey were forbid them; and it was unlawful for them to eat Blood, or the Flesh of Beasts strangled.

Of Uncleanness there were many Sorts among the *Israelites*: Not only they who eat of unclean Beasts were reckoned unclean, but also those who touched their Carcasses. Leprosy was reckoned the greatest Uncleanness; of the Nature and Quality of which the Priest was to judge, and to separate the Lepers from the rest of the People as he thought fit. There was also a Leprosy which clung to Cloths and Walls, and the Garments; after which the Moveables, and the Houses became unclean. The Women were unclean after lying-in for forty Days if they had a Son, and sixty Days if it were a Daughter. Of these Uncleanesses, some Sorts were cleansed by washing their Garments and Bodies; and others, as the last, by offering Sacrifice to cleanse them.

The Laws relating to Matrimony were these: The *Israelites* were forbid to marry strange Women. One Man

Man might have several Wives; but the Persons among whom it was not allowed to contract Matrimony were the Father, the Mother, the Mother-in-Law, the Sister by the Father or Mother's side, the Son's or Daughter's Daughter, the Father's Wife's Daughter, the Father or Mother's Sister, the Uncle, the Daughter in Law, the Brother's Wife, the Wife's Sister and Daughter, or Grandson or Grandaughter. However, it was not only lawful, but a Command, that the Brother should marry the Brother's Widow, if he died without Issue. Adultery and other Sins of Impurity were severally forbidden by the Law. In short, there was a Ceremony to try whether Women were guilty of Adultery. But besides the moral Precepts contained in the Decalogue, and more particularly explained in the Books of *Moses*, that holy Legislator by God's Direction gave them Laws for the Government of their Commonwealth, which were agreeable to Reason and Equity.

After some of these Directions for the Worship of God, *Moses* by the express Command of God appointed *Aaron* High-Priest, and his Sons and their Offspring to be the Priestly Race. And when they were sanctified *Moses* robed them, anointed their Heads with Oil, and made them offer Sacrifice for Sin. The Function of the Priests in general was to offer Sacrifice to the Lord, only the High-Priest's was peculiar; for he was allowed to go once a Year into the Sanctuary on the Day of Expiation, clad in his Priestly Garments, to burn Incense there before the Ark, and sprinkle the Blood of the Offering seven Times with his Finger. To the Priests were join'd all the Tribe of *Levi* to serve in the Tabernacle; to both which were appointed particular Allowances for their Subsistence. But if any of the Priestly Race, or of the Tribe of *Levi*, had any bodily Imperfections, they were excluded from the Function, but still enjoyed the Right and Privileges of their Birth. The

Obligations they lay under were these: They were to drink no Wine or intoxicating Liquors when they were to officiate in the Tabernacle; they were not to marry a Woman that was divorced, or had been prostituted; they were not to be at Funerals, unless they were of their own Fathers, Mothers, Sons, Daughters, Brothers, and Maiden Sisters. But now let us return to the History.

Eight Days after the Consecration of *Aaron* and his Sons, *Aaron* offered his first Burnt-Offering for himself and the People. This was so acceptable to God, that he gave a miraculous Testimony of his approving it by sending Fire upon the Altar, which consumed the Offering in the Sight of the People, who in loud Shouts and Acclamations expressed their Joy for God's so signally owning their Offering, and in Reverence they prostrated themselves on the Ground.

The Fire thus miraculously kindled ought to have been kept continually burning; for so the Lord had expressly^e commanded. But *Nadab* and *Abihu*, two unhappy Sons of *Aaron*, forgetful of their Duty, took their Censers, and putting^u common Fire in them, laid Incense thereon, and offered^w strange Fire before the Lord. This prophane Approach the affronted Majesty of Heaven instantly resents; for a suffocating Flame

^e Commanded. See *Levit. vi. v. 12, 13.* This Fire which *Levit. ix. v. 24.* is said to come from Heaven, and to have consumed the first Burnt-Offering, lasted till the Captivity of *Babylon*.

^u Common. There were two Sorts of Fire used in the Tabernacle; the Holy Fire which came from Heaven, and which God had commanded to be kept always burning for the Use of the Altar of Burnt-Offering; and the common or profane Fire, which was used to boil the Flesh of the Peace-Offering and Sacrifice for Sin.

^w Strange Fire. Whether these Sons of *Aaron* had too far indulged themselves in the Use of Wine, or other strong Liquors, which might have made them for-

getful of their Duty, doth not plainly appear from the Text, *Levit. x. 1.* Yet some Jewish Doctors affirm it; and from the Context, *ib. v. 9.* there is some Reason to suspect it, because as soon as they were carried out God charg'd *Aaron* and his Sons, on Pain of Death, Not to drink Wine or strong Drink, when they were to go into the Tabernacle of the Congregation; telling them, *It shall be a Statute to them throughout all Generations.* And he assigns there the Reasons of this so strict Prohibition, *That ye may put a Difference between the Holy and Unholy, and between the Clean and Unclean; and that ye may teach the Children of Israel all the Statutes which the Lord hath spoken to them by Moses.*

darted

darted through their Inwards, and stifled them, without destroying their Bodies or Garments. *Moses* taking occasion from this sudden and terrible Judgment to make the rest of the Priests fearful of falling into the like Sin, order'd them to bring the dead Bodies of *Nadab* and *Abihu* from before the Sanctuary, and carry them out of the Camp in the same Condition they found them. He likewise charged *Aaron* and his Sons not to mourn for *Nadab* and *Abihu* in shaving their Heads, or rending their Clothes; but that they should leave those Marks of Mourning to the rest of the People, from whom they ought to distinguish themselves in this, as well as in other Points, in Reverence to that holy Anointing whereby they had been consecrated to the Lord, and separated from the rest of their Brethren. A good Instruction and Warning to others to beware of murmuring or extream sorrowing when the Hand of God visits in Judgment.

The next historical Matter we meet with is of one whose Mother's Name was *Shelomith*, an *Israelitish* Woman, of the Tribe of *Dan*, but his Father was an *Egyptian*, and supposed to be a Profelyte to *Israel*. This young Man going out of his Tent quarrelled with a Man of *Israel*, and fighting, the Son of *Shelomith* is worsted. Being intraged at this Disgrace, and retaining, as we may suppose, too much of his Father's Principles, he fell a cursing and blaspheming the Name of the Lord. For this he is immediately apprehended, and brought before *Moses*, who committed him to Custody till the Mind of the Lord should be known concerning him; for though the third Command in the Decalogue forbids the taking of God's Name in vain; yet this blasphemous Cursing being an Offence of a higher Nature, against which no positive Law was yet provided, *Moses* had recourse to the Lord for Council and Direction therein, who determined thus: "Bring forth him that hath cursed without the Camp; and let all that heard him lay their Hands upon his

" * Head, and let all the Congregation stone him." *Moses* having from the Divine Oracle received the Sentence, ordered it to be put in Execution accordingly; and a Law was thereupon made, that whoever should from that time blaspheme the Name of the Lord, whether he were an *Israelite* or a Stranger, he should be stoned to Death.

Whilst the *Israelites* lay incamped in the Wilderness of *Sinai*, the Lord appointed *Moses* to take *Aaron*, and with him a principal Man of every Tribe, whom the Lord pitched upon by Name, and make a general Muster of the Men fit to bear Arms. *Moses* therefore with *Aaron* and these Assistants having taken an exact Account by Pole of all the Males from twenty Years old and upwards that were able to go forth to War in *Israel*, found the Number to be ^y Six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty Men, besides the *Levites*. For God had expressly exempted the Tribe of *Levi* out of this Muster, because he had designed them to the peculiar Service of the Tabernacle; not only to take Charge thereof and of all the Vessels belonging to it, but to take it down upon every Remove, and carry both the Tabernacle and the Vessels, and set it up when they pitched again.

After this general Muster, *Moses* and *Aaron* by the express Command of God order'd the Incampment of

* *Head*. This Way of laying Hands on the Heads of Criminals may seem to arise from several causes: 1. That they were Witnesses of the Fact, and that the Person condemn'd suffer'd justly, protesting that if he were innocent they desired his Blood might fall on their own Heads. 2. They put their Hands on the Head of the Criminal in Token of an expiatory Sacrifice; for Idolatry, Blasphemy, and such grievous Crimes, if they were not punished, they expected would attract a Guilt, not only on the Witness, but the whole Nation, which by the Death of the Criminal, as by a Victim, might be expiated. 3. That the Criminal was the just Cause of his own Death.

^y Six, &c. By this we may give a

Guess how much this People were increased in Number in this Year's Time, or thereabout, (see *Exod. xix. 1, 2.* and *Numb. i. 1.*) notwithstanding they had been in a travelling Condition, had been engaged in Battle with the *Amalekites*, (in which probably some of them might fall while *Amalek* prevail'd, *Exod. xvii. 11.*) and had lost about Three thousand Men upon the Account of their Calf. For they were computed to be but about Six hundred thousand Men, including the Tribe of *Levi* with them, when they came out of *Egypt*, *Exod. xii. 37.* And now they were 603550 Men, besides the Tribe of *Levi*, which being number'd by it self, yielded 22600 Males of a Month old and upwards, *Numb. iii. 39.*

this great Body of People in this manner: They were disposed into four Battalions, each under one general Standard, which were so placed that they inclosed the Tabernacle. The Standard of the Camp of *Judab* was first, which consisted of the Tribes of *Judab*, *Iffachar*, and *Zebulun*, the Sons of *Leah* pitched over-against the Tabernacle, on the East-side of it, towards the rising of the Sun. On the South-side was the Standard of the Camp of *Reuben*, under which were the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Simeon*, the Sons of *Leah* likewise, and of *Gad* the Son of *Zilpah* her Maid. On the West-side was the Standard of the Camp of *Ephraim*, under which were the Tribes of ² *Ephraim*, *Manasseh*, and *Benjamin*. And on the North-side was the Standard of the Camp of *Dan*, under which were the Tribes of *Dan* and *Naphtali*, the Sons of *Bilba*, *Rachel's* Maid, and of *Asher* the Son of *Zilpah*. ² Between the four great ^b Camps and the Tabernacle were pitched four less Camps, consisting of the Priests and *Levites*, near to the Tabernacle, in and about which their Service lay. On the East-side encamped *Moses* and *Aaron*, with *Aaron's* Sons, who had the Charge of the Sanctuary. On the South-side were the *Kohathites*, a part of the *Levites* descended from

² *Ephraim*. *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* supplied the Place of *Joseph* their Father; and therefore they are taken to be *Rachel's* Children, and so they and *Benjamin* make the third Standard.

² *Between*. *Josephus* in *Antiq. l. 3. c. 11*. tells us, That between each Tribe in every one of these four Quarters there were distant Spaces, like Streets, where there were buying and selling as in a Market, and Tradesmen in their Shops, in Manner of a City leading to and fro. This Camp is thought to be round, a Mile distant from the Tabernacle, that is, a Sabbath Day's Journey, as appears from *Joshua* iii. 4. where the Distance between the People and the Ark is commanded to be Two thousand Cubits.

^b *Camps*. Each of these Camps, as is said in the Text, had its several Banner or Standard, and each Standard its Motto or Inscription. Each Standard likewise had a distinct Sign written on it: *Reuben's* Standard had the Image of a Man, *Ju-*

dah's of a Lion, *Ephraim's* of an Ox, and *Dan's* that of an Eagle. These same four Creatures are used by *Ezekiel* i. 10. to describe the Nature of Angels. Every *Cherubim* is said to have four Faces; the Face of a Man, to shew his Understanding; of a Lion, to shew his Power; of an Ox, to shew his Ministratory Office; of an Eagle, to shew his Swiftnes in the Execution of God's Will. This same Description of Angels is in *Revel. iv. 6*. By the same four, in the Opinion of many of the Fathers, are shadowed the four Evangelists: The Man shadoweth *St. Matthew*, because he begins his Gospel with the Generation of Christ, according to his Humanity; the Lion *St. Mark*, because he begins his Gospel from that Voice of the Lion roaring in the Wilderness; the Ox *St. Luke*, because he begins with *Zacharias* the Priest; and the Eagle *St. John*, who, soaring aloft, be-
ginneeth with the Divinity of Christ.

Kohath

Josh. 1. 10

Kobath the second Son of *Levi*. On the West-side, behind the Tabernacle, stood the *Gershonites*, another part of the *Levites* descended from *Gershon*, *Levi's* eldest Son. And on the North-side were planted the *Merarites*, the remaining part of the *Levites*, who sprung from *Merai*, *Levi's* youngest Son.

This was the Order of their incamping. The manner of their dislodging and marching was thus: When they were to remove (which was when the Cloud was taken off the Tabernacle) the Trumpet was sounded, and upon the first Alarm the Standard of *Judāb* being raised, the three Tribes which belonged to it set forward. Then the Tabernacle being taken down, the *Gershonites* and the *Merarites* attended the Waggon with the Boards and Staves of it. When these were on their March, a second Alarm was sounded; upon which the Standard of *Reuben's* Camp advanced with the three Tribes under it. After them followed the *Kobathites*, bearing the Sanctuary, which being more holy, and less cumbersome, than the heavy Boards and Pillars of the Tabernacle, was not put into a Waggon, but carried on their Shoulders. Next followed the Standard of *Ephraim's* Camp, with the three Tribes belonging to it. And last of all, the other three Tribes under the Standard of *Dan* brought up the Rear.

* The People of *Israel*, having continued some time before the Mount of the Lord, decamped by God's Command

* *The, &c.* Designing in the Text to keep chiefly to the Historical Part of the Sacred Writ, and to preserve the Connection of Matter of Fact, with which the Preceptive would interfere, I thought it more useful for the Reader to continue the Series of the Story in the Text, and put the intervening Precepts and Orders here in the Notes. In the third and fourth Chapters of *Numbers* therefore we have the Lord's taking the *Levites* to himself in Exchange for the First-born, with the Reason for his so doing; likewise his giving the *Levites* to the *Priests* for the Service of the Tabernacle,

distributing them into three Classes or Orders, and appointing them their several Services. Afterwards in *Chap. v.* follows that clear and excellent Type of Gospel Purity, and Christian Church-Discipline, expressed in commanding the Children of *Israel* to put out of the Camp every Leper, and every one that had a running Issue, and whosoever was defiled with the Dead, both Male and Female; that they might not defile their Camps, in the midst of which the Lord dwelled. In the sixth Chapter follow divers Laws relating to Restitution in Cases of *Trespass*, and to the Trial of Jealousy

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Command on the first Day of the second Month, the second Year after their coming out of *Egypt*. In their March the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord went before them, to search out a resting Place for them: At the setting forward of which *Moses* said, *Rise, Lord, and let thine Enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.* And when the Ark rested again, he added, *Return, O Lord, unto the many thousands of Israel.* Having marched three Days into the Wilderness, they came to a Place called *The Graves of Lust*, from what happen'd to the *Israelites* there. They murmuring against the Lord, and complaining of the Weariness of their Journey, he was so incensed against them, that he sent down Fire, and destroyed those that were in the extream Parts of the Camp. Frighted at this Judgment they repair to *Moses*, upon whose Intercession the Fire was quenched, and the Name of that Place called *Taberah*, which signifies Burning. This Disaster, instead of terrifying them into their Duty, did but increase their murmuring: For being come to new Quarters, they expected Change of Diet; and because God did not presently gratify them, they in Contempt prefer the rank Food of *Egypt*, Onions, Leeks, and Garlick, to the delicious heavenly Dainties with which God had daily fed them. *Moses* had often heard their murmuring, and patiently born with them; but now that they were grown so numerous, and the Greatness of their Numbers demanding still more Care and Vigilance to govern and provide for them, the Sense of the Weight so great a Charge occasion'd, gave much Uneasiness to *Moses*, who in his Address to God complained of the heavy Burthen which the Care of so numerous and mutinous

Jealousy between Men and their Wives; to the Vow of *Nazarites*, to which is subjoined the Form of that Divine Blessing which the Lord himself did dictate for the Priests to pronounce upon the People. The seventh Chapter contains the Offerings of the Princes at the De-

dication of both the Tabernacle and the Altar, &c. The Consecration and Purification of the *Levites* are set down in the eighth. A Reinforcement of the Passover, and the guiding of the *Israelites* by the Cloud in the ninth Chapter.

a People

a People brought upon him. God hears his Complaint, and immediately provides a Remedy; bids him choose seventy Men of the Elders of *Israel*, and bring them with him to the Tabernacle of the Congregation. *And there*, said the Lord, *I will come down, and talk with thee; and I will indue them with the same Spirit with which I have inspired thee, and they shall bear the Burthen of the People with thee.* Moses accordingly brought the seventy Elders of the Children of *Israel* before the Lord, who kept his Word with him; for being inspired, they straightway prophesied. Nay, this Inspiration was so extensive, that two of those seventy, tho' they came not out with the rest to the Tabernacle, but remained behind in the Camp, were taken in among the rest, and received the same Impression of the Spirit, and prophesied as the others did. This so surpriz'd a certain young Man, that he ran from the Camp to the Tabernacle to acquaint *Moses* that *Eldad* and *Medad*, for so they were named, were prophesying in the Camp. *Joshua*, who as yet was not acquainted with the Operations of the Lord by his Spirit, over-hearing this Message, and thinking it some Derogation from his Master that they should prophesy, and not follow him, advised *Moses* to forbid them. But *Moses* reproving him gently for his Rashness, cry'd, "Dost thou envy them upon my Account? Would to God all the Lord's People were inspired, and that they might prophesy."

When *Moses* remonstrated to the Lord his Inability to support the Government of so great a People without some Assistance, part of his Complaint was that the People wanted Flesh, and he expostulates with God the Impossibility of their being supplied with it in that place, because they were so numerous. The Lord knowing the great Fatigue *Moses* had gone thro' in the Conduct of this People, bore with him, and only gave him this gentle Rebuke; "Is the Lord's Hand shorten'd? Thou shalt see whether my Word shall

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NUMBERS CHAP. XI.

Quails sent to the Israelites.

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NUMBERS II. Verse 31.

And there went forth a wind from the LORD, and brought quails from the Sea, and let them fall by the camp, etc.

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"shall come to pass unto thee or not." Accordingly, when *Moses* with the Elders was gone back to the Camp, and had acquainted the People with it, a South Wind arose, and drove vast Numbers of ^d Quails from the Sea-Coast to within a Mile of the Camp, where they lay about a Yard thick upon the Ground. The People fell greedily to gathering the Quails, which they, still distrusting God's Providence, (which had hitherto never failed them) did in such great Quantities as if they were to have no more. But God soon calls them to a dreadful Account for their insolent Demand of Flesh, and doubtful Distrust of his Power: For while they were regaling themselves with these Dainties, God visited them with a very severe ^e Plague, whereof many died, and were buried in the Place, which for their lusting after Flesh was called *Kibroth-Hattaavah*, which signifies the Graves of Lust or Concupiscence.

From hence they took their Journey to *Hazeroth*, which signifies Palaces. And here another unhappy Accident befel them. *Aaron* and his Sister *Miriam* observing the great Power of *Moses* their Brother with the People, and that God chiefly made use of him in the Delivery of his sacred Oracles to them, began to envy him: And to give some Colour to their Quarrel, they pretend to fall out with him upon the Account of his marrying a Foreigner, calling her ^f *Ethiopian*, and emulating *Moses's*

^d *Quails*. These Quails must be supposed to come from the *Arabian* or *Red Sea*; and as *Param* and *Kibroth-Hattaavah* were North and North East of the *Red Sea*, it must be a Southerly Wind. That these Quails came from the *Red Sea* is the Opinion of *Josephus*, *Pliny*, and several others, who affirm them to breed on the Coasts there.

^e *Plague*. Commentators cannot agree what this Plague was: Some will have it to be Fire; and that *Numb. xi. 33.* refers to the fourth Verse of the same Chapter; which I think cannot be, because this is subsequent Matter, and is named as a Punishment for the *Israelites* desiring

Flesh. Besides there are several Accidents that intervene between the third and thirty third Verses. Some will have it a Consumption or Phthisick, others the common Pestilence or Plague. But by the Words of the Text, v. 33. it more probably seems to have been a suffocating Distemper, like the Squinancy, which choaked them as they were eating, or soon after; for the Words are very express. *While the Meat was in their Mouths the Wrath of God fell upon them.* This is further confirmed by *Psal. lxxviii. v. 30. 31.*

^f *Ethiopian*. *Zipperah*, *Moses's* Wife, was a *Midianite*, and because *Midian* border'd on *Ethiopia*, she was so called, and

Moses's great Gifts and Authority, they added, "What hath the Lord spoken only by *Moses*? Hath he not spoken also by us?" *Moses* saw their Discontent; and though he was naturally of a meek Disposition, yet no Man was more ready to resent any Indignity offered to the Lord; but looking on this as a personal Pique, he would not take Notice of it. However, God, who was more immediately concern'd in this, resolves to vindicate himself and his faithful Servant; for on a sudden calling for *Moses*, *Aaron* and *Miriam*, at the Door of the Tabernacle he sharply reprehends them for their Insolence, asking them, How they durst speak against his Servant *Moses*? " & You share, said he, the great Prophetick Office indeed, and to you I have declared my Will in Dreams and Visions; but with *Moses* I have conversed more familiarly, and I will speak Face to Face with him, and shew him as much of my Glory as he is capable of seeing." Upon this the Lord withdrew in great Displeasure from them. *Moses* had the Comfort of seeing himself justified: But *Aaron*, to his great Confusion, sees his Sister *Miriam* made a dreadful Example of God's Anger; for on a sudden she is become a loathsom deform'd Leper; and well knowing he deserv'd to share in this Curse for his ungrateful Murmuring, presently addresses himself to *Moses*, acknowledges their Sin, begs Pardon, and intercedes for his Sister, that she may be restored to her Health. Good *Moses*, who was never wanting in Charity even to his Enemies, melts into Pity, and complies with his Request. But yet, to terrify others from moving Sedition again, and because the Offence was publick, God resolves to make an Example of *Miriam* in her Cure, and therefore he commands *Moses* to turn her out of the Camp, as a common Leper, for seven Days, and then to receive her again.

it is sometimes in holy Scripture comprehended under this Name. But here *Ziporah* is called *Ethiopian* in Ridicule and Spight; which they ought not to have done, for she having submitted to

the Law ought to have been reckoned an *Israelite*, as *Ruth* and *Rahab* were.

& You. *Miriam* is called a Prophetess, *Exod.* xv. 20.

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With and have to South Valley a Branch that of forced was this den Figure and various each of ing the call it of Grace observing *Israel* a Land and the vations " been " It is " of it " Wa

Miriam being returned to the Camp, the *Israelites* removed to the Desert of *Pharan*; from whence after several Incampments they came to *Kadesh-Barnea*, on the Frontiers of *Canaan*. Here *Moses* let them know that they were come near the promised Land: And for their Satisfaction, God commanded *Moses* to send twelve Men, one of each Tribe, to take a View of the Country. He charged them to go up to the Hills to observe whether the Country was strong or weak; whether there were many Inhabitants; how their Towns were situated, and whether fortified; whether the Soil was fertile or barren; whether it was planted with Trees or not; what Fruit they bore, and to bring some of it; for now was the time when the first Grapes were ripe, that is, in *July*.

With these Instructions the twelve Spies set forward; and having taken a View of the Country from North to South, in their Return they pass'd thro' a fertile Valley which abounded in Vines, where they cut down a Branch with but one Cluster of Grapes on it, but that of so vast a Weight and Bigness, that they were forced to carry it upon a Staff between two. Nor was this the only Product of this happy Soil; the Golden Fig and beautiful Pomgranate adorn the Trees, and variety of Fruits load the luxuriant Branches. Of each of these they take a Sample, and upon their leaving the place, from the great Plenty of Grapes, they call it the Valley of *Eschol*, which signifies a Cluster of Grapes. Having spent forty Days in viewing and observing the Country, they return to the Camp of *Israel* at *Kadesh*; and having shewed the Fruits of the Land they had been surveying to *Moses* and *Aaron*, and the whole Congregation, they related the Observations they had made in their Journey: "We have
" been, *said they*, in the Country to which you sent us.
" It is a fertile and plentiful Land; but the Inhabitants
" of it are powerful: There are great Cities with strong
" Walls. We have seen there Men of the Race of
" *Anak*,

" *Anak*, warlike Men, and of a gigantick Stature.
 " The *Amalekites* inhabit the South-part of the Land,
 " the *Hittites*, *Jebusites*, and *Amorites*, on the Moun-
 " tains; and the *Canaanites* on the Sea-Coasts and the
 " River *Jordan*." This was a frightful Account to a
 timorous People, prepared already by their own Dis-
 contents to receive any ill Impression; which they
 immediately shewed: But *Caleb*, one of those that
 were sent to discover the Country, to pacify them said,
 " Let us make our selves Masters of the Country, for
 " we are strong enough to conquer those People."
 But the Mutineers declared against engaging in a War,
 wishing they were in *Egypt* again; and choosing ra-
 ther to die in the Wilderness, than to fall by the Sword,
 and have their Wives and Children enslaved. In short,
 they propose to choose themselves a Chief, and return
 to *Egypt*. This so deeply affected *Moses*, that notwith-
 standing they were so obstinately bent upon their own
 Ruin, he and *Aaron* in the Presence of the Assembly
 fell on their Faces to deprecate the Vengeance which
 they feared God would let fly at these rebellious Mu-
 tineers; whilst *Caleb* and *Joshua*, thro' excess of Sor-
 row for the People's Blasphemy, rending their Cloaths,
 boldly stood up, and endeavour'd to persuade them
 that they might by God's Help overcome the Inhabi-
 tants of that Country: " The Land, said they, that
 " we passed thro' is indeed a rich and fertile Land,
 " abounding with all things necessary for Life. If we
 " please the Lord, he will bring us into this Land, and
 " give it us. Do not therefore by rebelling against
 " him forfeit his Promise and Protection: Nor be afraid
 " of the People of the Land, whom we shall as surely
 " conquer as we eat our Food, and as easily; for their
 " God hath withdrawn his Care of them; and if the
 " Lord continue it to you, ye have nothing to fear."
 This Speech made so little Impression upon them, that
 in a tumultuous manner they called out to stone them;
 and which they had probably done, had not God mira-
 culously

culously interposed by sending his Glory, which visibly appeared at that Instant in the Tabernacle of the Congregation before them all.

All this while *Moses* and *Aaron* lay prostrate on their Faces, and God being highly incensed with this Insolence of the *Israelites*, tells *Moses* he would send the Plague that should extirpate this People, and would make him Prince of a more numerous and powerful Nation. But good *Moses*, as he had before done, postpones his own private Advantage to the Honour of God, and the Good of this unworthy People, representing to the Lord, that if he destroyed the *Israelites*, the *Egyptians* and other Nations thereabout, who saw he had taken them into his Protection, would not fail to say he was not able to carry them into the Land he had promised them. Then imploring God's Mercy, and with repeated and importunate Intreaties begging Pardon for the People, God at length suffered himself to be prevailed on, and to satisfy *Moses* he pronounced them pardon'd: But it was with this Restriction; for reproaching them with their vile Ingratitude, who had so often and wonderfully tasted of his Bounty in providing against their Wants, screening them from their Enemies, and preserving them in all Dangers; since they had so often provoked him with their Disobedience, he declared that not one of those who had murmured should enter into the promised Land, except *Caleb* and *Joshua*; and that they should wander about there with their Children for the Space of forty Years. And tho' God at the pressing Intreaty of *Moses* did reverse the Sentence of sudden Death upon the whole Congregation of Murmurers, yet the ten false Spies, the immediate Authors of this Rebellion, who had brought an evil Report upon the good Land, were punished with Death at that time; for they died of the Plague before the Lord. But *Caleb* and *Joshua*, who had done their Duty in giving a faithful Account of their Journey and Observations they had made, were not only preserved alive, but commended of God,

who gave them his Promise that they should live to enter into the good Land, and take Possession of it.

Moses having reported these things to the Children of *Israel*, they are said to have mourn'd greatly: But by their Actions it doth not appear they were any better disposed; for changing their Minds on a sudden from a poor cowardly Fearfulness to a presumptuous Rashness, they said the next Morning, "We are ready to go to the place whereof the Lord hath spoken to us." But this was undertaken in their rebellious obstinate Temper, and was adding Sin to Sin. Which *Moses* well knew; for he endeavoured to restrain them, and expostulated the Danger with them; told them their Enterprise was against the expresse Command of God; that it would not prosper; forbade them going upon pain of being defeated and slain; assur'd them that God had left them, and that the *Amalekites* and *Canaanites* had gain'd the Passes in the Mountains before them. These Admonitions have no Weight with these obstinate People: They presumptuously suppose the Boldness of the Attempt will wipe off their former Cowardise, and reinstate them in God's Favour; and tho' the Ark of the Lord, which was to go before the Host, went not with them, nor *Moses* their General at the Head of them, yet they resolutely marched to the top of the Hills, where the Enemy surpris'd, defeated, and slew many of them, and pursued the rest as far as *Horma*.

After this, tho' it was but ^b eleven Days Journey from *Horeb* to *Kadesh-Barnea*, yet the People thro' their Disobedience spent the best part of two Years in going that eleven Days Journey. And which is still more strange, turning back from *Kadesh-Barnea*, and being near the Confines of the promised Land, they were ⁱ eight and thirty years more wandering in the Wilderness before they could come to the Borders of

^b Eleven. See *Dent.* i. 2.

ⁱ Eight and thirty, &c. See *Dent.* ii. 14.

the promised Land again. *Moses* having led them back into the Desert towards the *Red Sea*, they continued thereabout, making in the aforesaid time eighteen several Removes or Dislodgments, and at last they returned to *Kadesh-Barnea*, near the place from whence they went.

Whilst they were in the Wilderness many remarkable Occurrences befel them. The first of which is of a Man, who by a Post-fact Law was adjudged to be stoned to Death for violating the Sabbath by gathering Sticks on that Day, the Celebration of which God had strictly enjoined: And tho' there was no Penalty annexed to the Breach of it, those who brought the Offender before *Moses* knew he would determine justly; and committing the Man to safe Custody, *Moses* inquired of God what he should do in this Case, who immediately from his heavenly Oracle return'd this Answer, "That the Criminal should be conveyed "without the Camp, and there be stoned to Death." Which was accordingly executed.

And now Pride and Malice blow up a Faction into a Flame, and give great Disquiet to the Peace of *Israel*. The haughty *Corah*, Great-Grandson of *Levi*, separates from *Moses* and *Aaron*; and having seduced *Dathan* and *Abiram*, Sons of *Eliab*, of *Reuben's* Family, and drawn in two hundred and fifty *Levites* to his Party, that were Men of Fame and Interest among the People, he made most grievous Complaint against *Moses* and *Aaron*, charging them with Pride in usurping upon the Liberties of the People, who, they said, were as holy as themselves. *Moses* hearing this, ^k fell on his

^k *Fell, &c.* This is a Phrase often used to express Divine Adoration and Application to God for Help; and good Reason there is to believe that at this time *Moses*, who was well acquainted with the gracious and ready Assistance of God in time of Need, might apply himself to the Lord for Protection against this mutinous Crew, as apprehending some Violence from them, who in this tumultuous manner

attacked him. And it is very reasonable to think that, whilst he lay in this humble Posture, God appeared to him, and both comforted and advised him; for presently after we read, *Numb. xvi. 5.* that with great Assurance he spoke to the Rebels, and to vindicate himself, put the Matter between him and them upon Trial the next Day.

Face, and soon after rising from that humble Posture, he with great Courage and Assurance let them know that the next Day the Lord would decide the Controversy, and would make appear who were his Servants, and who was holy, and would admit whom he had chosen to come near him. Then with his usual Calmness and Serenity of Mind he argued the Matter with them; he mildly rebuked their Insolence, and told them that they took too much upon them. But in a more particular Manner addressing himself to *Corah*, and the *Levites* that joined him, he said: "Hear, ye Sons of *Levi*: Is it a matter of so light Concern, that the God of *Israel* hath distinguished you from the rest of *Israel*, to admit you to the more immediate Service of the Tabernacle, and to stand before the Congregation, and minister to them? Is not this an Honour sufficient to satisfy your ambitious Spirit, but that ye must aim at the Priesthood too? This is the Cause of your Clamours, and for this ye have moved the People to Sedition. But be assured, whatever ye may pretend against *Aaron*, this Insult is against the Lord; and it is against his Dispensations that ye murmur and conspire." *Dathan* and *Abiram* stood at a Distance whilst *Moses* talked with the rest, and therefore he sent for them to come to him; but they surlily returned Answer, that they would not come. And to retort his own Expressions upon himself, they add, "Is it a matter of so small Moment, that thou hast brought us up out of a Land that flowed with Plenty, to kill us in the Desert? Thou affectest Dominion, and wouldst make thy self Prince of us also. Notwithstanding thy fair Promises, thou hast not brought us into a Land that floweth with Milk and Honey, nor given us Inheritance of Fields and Vineyards; but when we were ready to take Possession of the promised Land, thou hast turned us back into this barren Desert, to repeat the Fatigues and Hardships we had before undergone: We will not come."

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NUMBERS CHAP. XVI. 40
The punishment of Korah, Dathan & Abiram.



NUMBERS 16. Verse 32.
*And the earth opened her mouth, and
swallowed them up, and their houses,
& all y^e men that appertained unto Korah.* 229.

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These unjust Reproaches highly provoked *Moses*, who, instead of returning any ill Language to them, addressing himself to God, said, "Respect not thou their Offering; for tho' they reflect thus unjustly upon me, I have not taken so much as an Ass from them, neither have I hurt one of them." Then summoning *Corah* and all his Company to meet him and *Aaron* before the Lord the next Day, he ordered them to bring their Censers ready prepared with Incense in them, and to appear all before the Lord. Accordingly on the Morrow they came with great Confidence; and having set Fire to the Incense in their Censers, they boldly plant themselves in the Door of the Tabernacle with *Moses* and *Aaron*; and to bid the greater Defiance to these holy Men, they had persuaded all the Congregation to side with them. This daring Carriage of the Mutineers so provoked the Almighty, that he resolves to take the matter into his own Hand; and darting forth his Glory upon the Tabernacle, he commands *Moses* and *Aaron* to withdraw, that he might consume the Rebels. But the two good Men knowing that the People were drawn into this Insolence by the wicked Arts of *Corah* and his Party, prostrate themselves before the Lord, and by their Prayers intercede for the People; "O God, thou God of the Spirits of all Flesh, said they, shall one Man sin, and wilt thou be angry with all?" Their Prayers are heard as soon as deliver'd, and God bids them command the People to withdraw; who, frighted with the amazing Splendor that broke from the Cloud, readily take the Warning, and draw off from the Tents of *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, who came boldly out, and stood daring at the Doors of their Tents with their Wives and Families. Then *Moses* addressing himself to the People, said, "By this you shall know that the Lord has commission'd me to do what I have done, and that I have undertaken nothing of my own Head. If these Men die the common way of Nature, or be visited as other Men,

“ then take it for granted, the Lord hath not sent me:
 “ But if he deal with them after a strange and unu-
 “ sual manner, and the Earth opening her Mouth
 “ swallow them up alive, then shall ye understand
 “ that these Men have provoked the Lord.” *Moses*
 had no sooner spoken these Words, but terrible Con-
 vulsions heave the labouring Earth, the Surface of
 which cleaving asunder, *Corah* and his Faction, with
 their Goods and ¹ Families, were swallow’d up alive, and
 the Ground closing upon them they perish’d. The rest
 of the People that stood round them, and saw their
 dismal Fate, being frightened with the loud Cries and
 Shrieks of the departing Mutineers, fled away for fear
 the Earth should have swallow’d them too. In the mean
 time God, to compleat his Vengeance on the rest of
 the Leaders in this Rebellion, who had profanely at-
 tempted to offer Incense contrary to the Law, sent
 down Fire from Heaven, and destroy’d the two hun-
 dred and fifty Men that had join’d with *Corah*. The
^m Censers, on which they intended to offer, remain’d
 amidst the Conflagration; which God order’d to be
 preserv’d, but not for the same Use as formerly, nor
 in the same Form: Therefore he commanded *Moses* to
 direct *Eleazer*, *Aaron*’s Son, to beat them out into broad
 Plates, and fix them to the Altar of the Burnt-Offerings;
 assigning this Reason for it, “ That it might be for a
 “ Memorial to the Children of *Israel*, that no Stran-
 “ ger, or any that was not of *Aaron*’s Family, should
 “ presume to offer Incense before the Lord, lest he
 “ died the Death of *Corah* and his Company.

¹ Families. Except some of *Corah*’s
 Sons. See *Numb.* xxvi. 11.

^m Censers. The two hundred and fifty
 Princes had not offered any Incense, be-
 ing prevented by Death: However, it
 may be presumed that they had lighted
 their Incense at the holy Fire; by which
 they obtained (at least in the Opinion of
 the People) a sort of Consecration. The
 Lord therefore, to keep up among them
 the Reputation and Esteem of things de-
 voted, would not have them put to pro-
 fane Uses: And to make a Difference

between his own Institutions and Men’s
 Contrivances, (especially those of wick-
 ed Men) he order’d all those Brazen
 Censers to be wrought into broad Plates,
 and to cover the Altar with them; to
 the intent, that these Brazen Plates being
 polished bright, might by their Lustre
 put the People in mind of the Offence
 of those that were once the Owners of
 them; and by seeing them often, (as
 they must do every time they look’d up-
 on the Altar) they might be warn’d of
 the same Crime.

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So visible a Punishment, one would think, might have been sufficient to deter the *Israelites*, and keep them within the Limits of due Obedience for the future; but it affected them only for the present, for from this Judgment the next Day they took occasion to mutiny afresh, murmuring against *Moses* and *Aaron*, and charging them with the murder of so many Persons. They well knowing the unruly Nature of this obstinate People, and fearing to what degree of Madness and Violence they might have proceeded, took a Sanctuary in the Tabernacle: where, as soon as they had enter'd, the Cloud cover'd it, and the Glory of the Lord appeared; which was a sure Token that the Lord had something to say to them. Immediately God called to *Moses* and *Aaron*, and bid them be gone from the rest of the Congregation, for he would consume them in a Moment. They thereupon fell down, as they used to do on such Occasions, to intercede for the People; but, as early as they were in supplicating, Vengeance was before them; for the Lord, provoked by their repeated Rebellions, had already sent a Plague among them. Which *Moses* perceiving, bid *Aaron* take a Censer, and put Fire in it from the Altar, and Incense, and hasten to the Congregation to make an Atonement for them. *Aaron* did as *Moses* directed him, and standing between the dead and the living, he pray'd for the People, and the Plague ceas'd. However, in that short space of Time that this Plague raged among them, there died fourteen thousand seven

* Sanctuary. This shews to whom we ought to fly in any Persecution or Distress; and that God is our only Refuge and Protection. Whence the great Fruit and Advantage of Persecution appears, that it compels us to apply to him.

o Plague. Commentators are generally silent in their Opinion what this Plague was. Plague is a comprehensive Term, as we see in the Plagues of *Egypt*, which are all called Plagues, tho' they were all different from each other. We may reasonably think that it was the Pestilence

or infectious Sickness; and not Fire, as *Cornel. à Lap.* and *Abulen.* would have it, who are the only Commentators that pretend to define it. The *Septuagint* likewise render it by a general Word, *Toransis*, signifying no more than *Breaking forth*, or *Raging*, Numb. xvi. 46. and 50. That it was a Pestilence the *Chaldee Paraphrase* seems to hint, in the Complaint of the *Israelites*, Numb. xvii. 12. *We die by the Sword, the Earth swalloweth us up, and the Pestilence consumeth us.*

hundred Men, without reckoning those who perished in the Sedition with *Corah* and his Company.

God having in so dreadful a manner declared against those who opposed the Government of *Moses*, and the Priesthood of *Aaron*, to end all Contests and Disputes amongst the ambitious and aspiring, resolv'd by a convincing Miracle to put an end to the Controversy, and establish and confirm the Priesthood in the Family in which he had placed it. In order to this, he commanded *Moses* to take a Rod from each Tribe, and to write upon it the Name of the Prince of that Tribe to which it belong'd; and on the Rod of the Tribe of *Levi* to write *Aaron's* Name; which when he had done, he was to lay up these twelve Rods in the Tabernacle, before the Ark of the Testimony, where God was to declare his Will farther to them. And to let them know that God would determine the Controversy, and put an end to their Murmurings, he would cause the Rod of that Man to blossom whom he would choose.

Moses pursues this Direction, and taking a Rod from the Prince of each Tribe, wrote his Name upon it, and laid up all the Rods together in the Tabernacle. And the next Day he went in and brought forth all the Rods, and in the Presence of all the People he gave each Man his Rod, which they found to be the same as they had deliver'd to *Moses* over Night except *Aaron's*, which had not only budded, but blossom'd, and bare ripe Almonds. This was a convincing Proof, that God had singled out *Aaron* to the Priestly Office. To preserve the Memory therefore of the Determination of this Controversy, the Lord bid *Moses* bring *Aaron's* Rod back again, and lay it before the Ark of the Tabernacle, to be kept for a Memorial of their Rebellion, and that seeing it they might forbear to murmur, and so prevent their Death.

And now they began to recollect their Deserts, and the Causes of their Punishment; and since God had in his own House visited them for their Sins, they enumerate

the

the P several ways they had been punish'd. Behold, said they, we die; we perish; we are all lost. And because God had in the Tabernacle express'd his Displeasure more than once in punishing them in an exemplary manner, they cried out, If we approach the Tabernacle we die; not considering, that their own Iniquities drew the Justice of God upon them in this place, for which he had order'd the Altar to be cover'd with a remarkable shining Brass, to put them in mind of their Obedience.

The next historical Matter we meet with is the *Israelites* being at *Kadesh*; where *Miriam* (who was Sister to *Aaron* and *Moses*, and elder than both) died, and was buried there. In this place the *Israelites*, impatient of any Inconveniency, for want of Water began (as usually) to exclaim against *Moses* and *Aaron*; saying,

^P Several. The *Chaldee* Text describeth their murmurings thus: We die by the Sword; as in the Case of their daring to enter the promised Land contrary to *Moses*'s Advice, when they were slain by the *Canaanites* and *Amorites*. The Earth swalloweth us up, as in the Case of *Corah* and his associates. The Pestilence doth consume us; as in the Case of the Fourteen thousand seven hundred that died of it.

[¶] Remarkable. As being made of the Brazen Censers, which belonged to the Two hundred and fifty Princes that had joined *Corah*.

The next, &c. The History breaks off at the seventeenth Chapter of *Numbers*, and begins not again till the twentieth. In the eighteenth Chapter is set forth the charge of the Priests and *Levites* distinctly, with the Portions or Provisions of Maintenance for each. In which, among other Things, it is to be observed, that the Priests had for their Portion the Offerings of the People, the Meat-Offerings, Sin-Offerings, Trespass-Offerings, Heave-Offerings, Wave-Offerings, First-Fruits, and the Tithes of the Tithes, which they were to receive from the *Levites*, who receiv'd the Tithes from the People. And these Tithes of Tithes, which the Priests were to receive from the *Levites*, were to be offer'd by the *Levites* an Heave Offering to the Lord; as the Tithes themselves, which were given to the *Levites*, were offer'd an Heave-offering to the Lord before. So that all the Tithes, as well

those from the People to the *Levites*, as those out of them from the *Levites* to the Priests, were by this Ceremony of Heaving render'd as completely a Part of the Ceremonial Law, as the rest of the Offerings under that Dispensation were. The nineteenth Chapter of *Numbers* treateth of legal Pollutions and Uncleannesses, and of the Water of Separation or Purification, by which unclean Persons were to be cleansed, directing how it should be made and used: Which Water was a lively Type of the Blood of Christ; who being himself perfectly clean, by sprinkling cleanseth the Unclean.

By the Interposition of these Matters in these two Chapters, we miss the Account how the *Israelites* came to *Kadesh* again in the Wilderness of *Zin*; where we find them in *Ch. xx*. Only *Moses*, briefly reciting some of their Frauds in *Dent. ii*, tells us, That after they had been beaten by the *Amalekites* and *Amorites*, they turn'd and took their Way in the Wilderness along the *Red Sea*, as God had commanded *Moses*, *Numb. xiv. 25*. and compass'd *Mount Seir* many Days; (which both *Tremellius* and our Bible in their Notes reckon eight and thirty Years) till at length the Lord said, *Ye have compass'd this Mountain long enough, turn ye Northward. Dent. ii. 3*.

[¶] Elder. That she was elder than *Moses* appears from *Exod. ii. 4*. where she is said to be left to watch him when he was exposed in the Ark of Rushes.

“ Why

“ Why have ye brought the Lord’s People into the
 “ Wilderneck to kill them and their Cattle? Why did
 “ you persuade us to leave the fertile Land of *Egypt* to
 “ bring us into this barren place, which affords neither
 “ Water to quench our Thirst, nor Fruits to satisfy
 “ our Hunger? Would to God we had perished with
 “ our Brethren before the Lord.” *Moses* and *Aaron* in
 these Difficulties, as before, address themselves to God
 for help; who bids *Moses* take the Rod, and that he
 and *Aaron* should assemble the People; and then, said
 the Lord, “ Speak ye to the Rock in their Sight, and
 “ it shall yield Water for them.” *Moses* hereupon tak-
 ing the ^c Rod from before the Lord went, and with *Aa-*
ron’s Assistance assembled the People together before the
 Lord. *Moses* hitherto had paid an exact and absolute
 Obedience to all the Commands God had injoin’d him;
 but now in deviating from his Instructions, tho’ seem-
 ingly but a little, he committed the greatest Miscarriage
 of his whole Life: For he was bid to speak to the Rock
 before the People; but instead of doing, he speaks to
 the People, saying, “ Hear now, ye Rebels! Must we
 “ fetch Water for you out of the Rock?” In which he
 not only express’d Impatience and Heat of Spirit, but
 Incredulity, making a doubt of what God had posi-
 tively promised. It is certain he disobey’d God in this;
 for he “ smote the Rock twice with the Rod, and
 imme-

^c Rod. The Text does not expressly
 tell us, whether of the Rods this was;
 that with which he did so many Mira-
 cles in *Egypt* formerly, or that by which
 they were so lately reclaimed from a Re-
 bellion: It seems most likely to be the
 latter; because in *Numb.* xx. 9. it is cal-
 led the Rod from before the Lord, and
 which yet bore a Miracle upon it, the
 Buds and Almonds. But be it which of
 them we will imagine, the Design of the
 Lord’s bidding *Moses* to take the Rod
 was, that the People, at the Sight of it,
 might see their Error, repent, and con-
 fess that nothing was too hard for their
 God.

^d Smote. If it should be alledg’d in

Favour of *Moses*, That when he was
 sent to the Rock before, *Exod.* xvii. 5, 6.
 he was bid to take his Rod in his Hand,
 and smite the Rock, that the Water might
 come forth; and that from thence he might
 infer, he was also now to smite the Rock
 with his Rod: It may be said, That as
 he then follow’d his Instruction, so he was
 to have done here. He smote the Rock
 then, because he was bid; but he did not
 speak to it because he was not bid: So
 now he should have spoken to it, because
 he was bid; and not have smitten it, be-
 cause he was not bid. Those Expositors,
 who seem most to excuse this Diffidence
 of *Moses*, impute it to his great Age,
 (old Age being naturally prone to Choler
 and

immediately there issued out Water in great Plenty: By which we may see, God would not lose the Honour of his Miracle for his Servant's Fault, but caused the Water to flow from the Rock. But to shew, he expected an intire Obedience to his Commands, tho' *Moses* had been his faithful Servant in performing all his Instructions before, yet now for the Breach of his Obedience he denounces to *Moses* and *Aaron* (who was in the same Transgression with him) their Doom in these Words: "Because ye believ'd me not, to ^w sanctify me in the Sight of the Children of *Israel*, therefore you shall not have the Honour of leading the People into the ^x Land which I have given them." From this unhappy Accident, the place was called *Meribah*, which signifies, The Water of Contradiction.

Moses being thus reprimanded humbly submits, but continued in his Command and Care of the People; and intending to decamp, that he might secure their march from *Kadesh*, he sent an Embassy to the King of *Edom*, (upon whose Borders they now were) to inform him of the Travels and Labours of the *Israelites*; desiring leave to pass thro' his Country, on account that they were both

and impatience) and that he being provoked at this fresh Murmuring in Diffidence struck the Rock; not that he doubted of the Power of God, or his Faithfulness in performing his Promise of producing Water out of it; (for in his and *Aaron's* Speech to the People he taxes them with Incredulity;) but he question'd whether God would think so rebellious and incredulous a People worthy of a Miracle, who had slighted and so soon forgotten the many and late Deliverances they had received from his bountiful Hand, that never yet failed to relieve them in any Distress; or whether God, so justly provoked, had promis'd ironically, or sarcastically, or conditionally, that if the *Israelites* would cease to murmur, he would send them Water. And that therefore he struck the Rock with Diffidence, believing it impossible or improbable, that such incredulous Wretches deserved a Miracle. But these are mere Conjectures and Suppositions; for God is an absolute Sovereign, and expects an

absolute Obedience to his Commands. Nor will he allow even his Favourite Servant *Moses* to vary from his Command, or mix his own Conceptions with it unpunished.

^w *Sanctify*. That is, you should shew them that I am holy, omnipotent, merciful, and true; and that I can and would perform my Promise to this wicked and ungrateful People, as ye know, and ought to remember I have often done.

^x *Land*. This was the very Land of *Canaan* on the other side of *Jordan*; for *Moses* did afterwards enter the promised Land on this side of *Jordan*; when he took the Kingdoms of *Sihon* and *Og*, which he gave to the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and to the half Tribe of *Manasseh*. This was a sore Mortification to *Moses* not to see the promised *Canaan*, being thereby frustrated of the Fruit of his long and troublesome Conduct. By which we ought to learn to die to the World and our selves, and live only to God.

descended

descended from *Isaac* and *Rebecca*; assuring him that they would commit no Acts of Hostility, nor trespass in his Fields or Vineyards, nor so much as drink of his Water, without paying for it, but only travel on the King's Highway. The surly *Edomite* not only refus'd them Passage, but with a potent Army came out to defend his Frontiers, and oppose the *Israelites*, should they attempt to pass. They therefore turn'd another way, and marching from *Kadesh* came to Mount *Hor*, near the Borders of *Edom*. And now the time drawing near, that the Children of *Israel* were to enter the promised Land, into which the Lord had told *Aaron* he should not enter, because of his Transgression at *Meribah*, God gave *Aaron* notice of his approaching Death, and commanded *Moses* to take *Aaron* and *Eleazer* his Son, who was to succeed him in the Office of High-Priest, to the Mount, there to strip *Aaron* of his Priestly Garments, and put them upon *Eleazer* his Son. Which when *Moses* had done *Aaron* died on the top of Mount *Hor*, being a hundred twenty and three Years old. And when the People saw that *Aaron* was dead, they bewailed him thirty Days.

It was the beginning of the fifth Month of the fortieth Year of their Travels from *Egypt*, when they were upon the Borders of *Canaan*; and *Arad*, one of the Kings of *Canaan*, that dwelt in the South, hearing which way they came, went out and fought them, and took some of them Prisoners. This Defeat brought them to a Sense of their Duty; and knowing they were now upon the Borders of the promised Land, they made a Vow to the Lord, promising that if he would deliver this People into their Hands, they would utterly destroy their Cities. God takes them at their Word, and gave them such Success, that at *Hormah* they engaged these *Canaanites* and defeated them, took their Cities and utterly destroyed them.

Hormah. See *Judges* i. 17. This seems to be the same Place to which the *Israelites* about eight and thirty Years before, *Numb.* xiv. 45. *Amalekites* had beaten and chased the *Is-*

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Flush'd with this Victory they dislodged from Mount Hor, and took their way by the *Red Sea*, marching round *Edom*, thro' which they had been ²denied Passage, and forbidden to ^aforce their way. And because the way was long, the Passes uneasy, and the Country barren, they, forgetting their late Success, and reflecting only on the present Discouragements, relapse into their old Humour of murmuring, complaining directly against God and *Moses*: "Wherefore, *say they*, have ye brought us up out of *Egypt*, to die in the Wilderness, where there is neither Meat, nor Drink, but this ^b*Manna*, which our Stomachs loath." God seeing them thus forgetful of the many and repeated Acts of his Providence, punishes this bold Impiety of theirs, by sending ^cfiery Serpents amongst them, which destroy'd a great Number of these Rebels. This Punishment brought the rest to their Senses, who flying to injur'd *Moses* acknowledge their Guilt, and cry for Mercy: Who, tho' he had lately incurred the Displeasure of the Lord on their Account, in Pity to their Distress addresses himself in Prayer to God for them; who did not immediately take away the Serpents, but leaving them to be a farther Scourge, and make them more sensible of their Transgression, provided a Remedy to prevent their Death, and heal their Hurts: For he order'd *Moses* to make a ^dSerpent of a fiery Colour, and to set it up on a high Pole, that the People, who were bitten by the fiery Serpents, might by looking up to

² Denied. See *Numb.* xx. 18, 21.

^a Force. See *Deut.* ii. 5.

^b *Manna*. This is the same Complaint which they made before. See *Numb.* xi. 6.

^c *Fiery*. These Serpents were not so by Nature, but by the Effect of their Biting, which caused a great Inflammation or Burning in all those that were bitten by them.

^d *Serpent*. This *Brazen Serpent* (a significant Type of our Lord Jesus Christ, who being lifted up as an *Ensign for the Nations*, *Isa.* xi. 12. gives Life and Salvation to all them, that in true Faith look up to him) remain'd among the

Jews above 700 Years, to the Time of *Hezekiah* King of *Judah*; who in a holy Zeal, pursuant to God's Command, *Exra* xxiii. 24. *Deut.* vii. 5. removing the high Places, breaking the Images, and cutting down the Groves, brake also in Pieces this *Brazen Serpent* among the rest; (tho' *Moses* by the Express Command of God had made it, and was so valuable a Piece of Antiquity) because he found the People had for a long time committed Idolatry, in burning Incense to it. And to put a Contempt upon it, he called it *Nehushtan*, a Piece of Brass only, *2 Kings* xviii. 4.

it be recovered. *Moses* accordingly made the Form of a Serpent in Brass, and set it up as a Banner; and whoever afterwards was bitten by a Serpent, if he look'd upon that Brazen Serpent, recovered.

The *Israelites* at this time were at *Phanon*, whither they were come from *Salmona*, their first Camp, after they remov'd from about Mount *Hor*. From *Phanon* they went and incamped at *Oboth*, and thence to *Jieabarim*, in the Desert that is before *Moab* to the Eastward. Decamping from thence they came to *Zared*, and afterwards incamped by the River of *Arnon*, which is in the Desert, and runs to the Frontiers of the *Amorites*; for it divides them from the *Moabites*. They held on their March, and at length came into the Plains of *Moab*, on the Banks of *Jordan*, opposite to *Jericho*, to the Top of *Pisgab*. From hence *Moses* sent Ambassadors to *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*, to demand a Passage thro' his Country, promising not to break into the Fields or Vineyards, nor to drink of the Water, but only to march along the Highway, till they were past his Country. The *Amorite* Prince, not thinking it safe to receive so numerous and unsettled a People into the Heart of his Kingdom, positively denied them Passage: And thinking it better Policy to attack than be attack'd, gathering what Force he could, marches out to give them Battle at *Jabaz*, where *Israel* routed him, and seiz'd his Country. They likewise took *Heshbon*, and the Villages about it, which *Sihon* had before taken from the *Moabites*; and being thus possess'd of the *Amorites* Land, they dwelt there. After this *Moses* sent out Forces to discover *Fazar*, another City of the *Amorites*, which they took with all its Territories, and drove out the People that dwelt there. Then turning another Way they marched towards *Bashan*, where the ^e Giant *Og*, another *Amorite* King,

* *Giant*. The Description of this Gigantick King, who was the last of the Race of the Giants, we have in *Deut. iii. 11*, &c. whose Stature we may guess at by the Size of his Bed, which being made of

Iron for Strength, was nine Cubits in length, and four Cubits in breadth, after the Cubit of a Man, which being the common Cubit, containing half a Yard, or one Foot and a half of English Measure,

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King, reigned. This monstrous Prince, with his Gigan- tick Troops, drew out to give the *Israelites* Battle. But lest they should be discouraged at the Sight of this formidable Army, who exceeded the common Size of Nature, *Moses* by the Command of God bid them fear nothing, for he had delivered them into their Hands, and they should make as easy a Conquest over them, as they did over *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*. *Israel* thus encouraged join'd Battle, and slew King *Og* and his Sons, and all his People. They also took all his Cities, threescore in Number, all fenced with high Walls, Gates and Bars, besides open Towns and Villages a great many; destroying utterly the Inhabitants, but keeping all the Cattle and the Spoil of those Cities for a Prey to themselves, as they had done before in the ^e Case of *Sihon*, the other *Amorite* King.

Incourag'd with these Successes the *Israelites* march to the Plains of *Moab*, and incamp on this side *Jordan* by *Jericho*. The approach of these victorious Strangers strikes a Terror wherever they come, and the Fame of their late Success against the *Amorites*, put the King of *Moab* and his People into a terrible & Consternation.

sure, if reduced to Yards or Feet, will make four Yards and a half, or thirteen Feet and a half, for the Length, and two Yards, or six Feet, for the Breadth of the Bed.

^f *Case*. See *Dent. iii. 4, 5, 6, 7.* and so they were commanded, *Dent. xx.* where the *Fesial Laws*, or Laws of War and Heraldry, are set down: By which they were required upon their Approach to any City, to offer Peace first; which if the Inhabitants accepted, and surrender'd to them, they should only make them Tributaries. But if they refused Peace, and put them to besiege and storm the Place, they should, when they had taken it, put all the Men to the Sword; but might keep the Women and Children, with the Cattle and other Spoil for themselves. These were their Instructions for the Cities of remoter Countries; but for the Cities of those neighbouring People, which the Lord had given them for an Inheritance, as particularly the *Hittites* and *Amorites*, the *Canaanites* and

Perizzites, the *Hivites* and *Jebusites*, they were to save none alive, but utterly to destroy all the Men, Women and Children. Now as this Execution was a Type of the spiritual Warfare against the Soul's Enemies; of which none, old or young, great or small, are to be spared, or saved alive; so the political Reason of this martial Severity is given in the 18th Verse of *Dent. xx.* *That they teach you not to do after their Abominations, which they have done unto their Gods, so should ye sin against the Lord your God.* So that this Severity seems to be a kind of Self-Defence; a Destroying of their Enemies, who were Idolaters, lest they should tempt and draw the *Israelites* to do that, which would provoke the Lord to destroy them.

^g *Consternation*. If the *Moabites* had known the Protection they were under, they needed not to have been afraid, for, if they would have been quiet, they were particularly exempted from the Sword of *Israel*, *Dent. ii. 9.*

Balak the King knowing himself too weak to ingage the mighty Force of *Israel*, advised with the Chiefs of ^b *Midian*, to whom he propos'd the common Danger of these Invaders: The Result of their Consultation was this; King *Balak* should send Messengers to ⁱ *Balaam* the Son of *Beor*, who lived at *Pethor*, a City in *Mesopotamia*, to invite and bribe him to curse the *Israelites*; for they had so great an Opinion of his Skill and Power in Divination, that they thought he could curse or bless as he pleas'd. By general Consent therefore they depute a select Number of their chief Men with Presents to invite him to go with them to *Balak*. When they came to him, and had deliver'd their Message from the King, he desired them to tarry with him that Night, for he could give them no Answer till he had consulted the Lord.

God, who knew the sordid Mind of *Balaam*, to try how he would represent the matter, ask'd him, "What Men they were, that were with him? They are some," *said he*, whom the King of *Moab* hath sent to me, to let me know, that there is a People come out of *Egypt*, which cover the Face of the Earth; and to desire me to come to him, and curse them, in hopes that he then may be able to overcome them, and drive them away." But God said to him, "Thou shalt not go with them, nor curse that People, for they are blessed." *Balaam*, not daring to disobey the Command of the Lord, got up in the Morning, and dismissing the Messengers said, "Be gone to your own Country; for the Lord refuseth to give me Leave to go with you." They return to the King, but misreport *Balaam's* Answer; for instead of telling him, that God had refused to let him come, they tell him, that *Balaam* refused to come. Whereupon *Balak* falsely suggesting to him-

^b *Midian*. The *Midianites* were Neighbours and Confederates with the *Moabites*; therefore *Balak* represents to them the Danger, and asks their Advice and Assistance.

ⁱ *Balaam*. Several Fathers represent *Balaam* as a Wizard, and Prophet of the

Devil, but by the free Access he had to God, particularly *Numb.* xxiv. 13. and xxii. 18. he was not a Prophet of the Devil; tho' it is plain from the Holy Text he was covetous, and *St. Peter, Epist.* 2. *Ch.* ii. v. 15. says, *He loved the Wage of Unrighteousness.*

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self, that either the Number and Quality of his Mes-
sengers did not answer *Balaam's* Ambition; or the Va-
lue of the Presents his Covetousness, resolves to gratify
both; and therefore he immediately dispatches away
Messengers of more honourable Rank, and with lar-
ger Proposals. "Let nothing, *said he*, hinder thee
" from coming to me; for I will promote thee to
" very great Honour, and give thee whatsoever thou
" wilt ask, if thou wilt come and curse this People.

Tho' *Balaam* had received an expreſs Command from
the Mouth of God, neither to go, nor curse *Israel*; yet
he did not disapprove of the Offer, only tells the Mesſen-
gers, "If *Balak* would give me his House full of Silver
" and Gold, I cannot go beyond the Word of the Lord
" my God." But to shew his wicked Inclination to the
promised Reward, he fawningly intreats the Messengers
to tarry all Night with him, that he might know what
the Lord would say farther to him. This was tempting
God; who therefore in Displeasure left him to his^k own
Will. He had positively at first told him his Mind, and
it was the highest Disobedience and Presumption to
pretend or offer at the reversing of it, by a farther Ap-
plication. However, blinded with Covetousness and
Pride, he again addressed himself to God; who provok'd
at his Obſtinacy leaves him to himself, and tells him, "If
" the Men come to call thee, ¹ rise and go with them;
" but what I shall say to thee, that only shalt thou do.

Notwithstanding this Permission to go, God was re-
solvd to make *Balaam* sensible of his Displeasure. Upon

^k *Own Will.* Thus God dealt with the
Israelites afterwards, when they, reject-
ing his Government, would needs have
a King, that they might be like other
Nations, 1 *Sam.* viii. 7. He answered
their Desire; but he did it in his An-
ger, *Hosea* xiii. 11. And at other Times,
when they would not hearken to him,
he gave them up to their own Hearts
Lust, and let them walk in their own
Counsels, *Pſalm* xviii. 11, 12. From
whence we may observe how unfit we
are to choose for our selves; especially

in Opposition to God's immediate Com-
mands and Instructions.

¹ *Rise, &c.* This by the Consent of
Interpreters is look'd upon, not as a
Command but a Permission; and seems
ironically spoken; as if God had said,
" Since thou art so eager to go, though
" thou knowest it is against my Mind,
" take thy own Course; Go if thou wilt.
" But yet thou shalt not gain thy End;
" thou shalt go with this Restriction on
" thy Will. Thou shalt say nothing, but
" what I shall direct thee,

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this.

this Concession he got up in the Morning and went with the Princes of *Moab*: But as he was on the Road, the Angel of the Lord stood on the Way with a drawn Sword in his Hand. *Balaam's* Mind was so taken up with the Expectation of the Advantage he should make of this Expedition, that he thinks of nothing else; but it pleased God to give the *Ass*, on which *Balaam* rode, such Quickness of Sight, that she both saw the Angel and shun'd him, by turning out of the Road into the Field. *Balaam* for this beats the *Ass*, and struggling to put the Beast into the Way, the Angel stood in another narrow Way between two Walls, which inclosed some Vineyards. The *Ass*, seeing the Angel, clung up to the Wall, and crush'd *Balaam's* Foot. This so incens'd him, that he beat her again. But when the Angel went farther, and stood in a narrow place, where the *Ass* could not turn, she fell down under him. For this *Balaam* was in a greater Passion than before, beating her with his Staff. But God, to rebuke the Wilfulness of the Prophet, miraculously open'd the Mouth of the *Ass*, and she said to him, "What have I done to thee, " that thou shouldst beat me these three times? Be- " cause, said he, thou hast deserved it in mocking " me: Had I a Sword in my Hand I would kill thee." The *Ass* reply'd, "Am not I thine *Ass*, upon which " thou hast been us'd to ride, ever since I was thine; " did I ever serve thee so before?" He answer'd, No. The Unusualness of this Accident, one would think, might have been an Admonition to *Balaam* to let him know, there was something more than common in the *Ass's* speaking; but his Resentment against the *Ass* for bruising his Foot and throwing him, and stopping him thus upon the Road, when he was in haste to be made rich and great, had so blinded him, that he thought nothing of it, till God himself opened his Eyes, and let him see the Angel standing in the Way with his Sword drawn in his Hand; at the Sight of which he bowed himself down, and fell on his Face. The An-
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NUMBERS CHAP. XXII.

Balaam's ass speaketh.



NUMBERS 22. Verse 28.

*And if Lord opened y^e mouth of y^e ass, and she
said unto Balaam, what have I done unto thee,
that thou hast smitten me these three times?*



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gel expostulates with him, tells him his Undertaking was perverse, in attempting to go against the express Command of God, and that therefore he was come to stop him; and but for his Ass, which he had so barbarously abused, he had slain him.

Balaam convicted with this just Reproach confesses his Sin, and faintly offered to turn back, if his Journey displeased the Lord. But this he needed not have said; for he knew well enough, that his Undertaking from the first displeased God, because at his first Address he was forbidden by him to go. However, the Lord resolv'd out of this Man's wicked Inclination to raise some Advantage; and therefore since he was gone so far, he would not send him back, but make him, who was hired to curse, be the Instrument of pronouncing a Blessing on his People. Having thus chastised *Balaam* on the Way, he suffered him to go on, but with this Charge, that he should only speak what God should tell him.

Balaam thus dismiss'd went on his Journey with the Princes of *Moab*; and when *Balak* understood that *Balaam* was coming, that he might the more oblige him by personal Civilities, he came out to meet him, himself receiving him upon the Confines of his Dominions. At their meeting the King in a friendly manner blamed *Balaam* for refusing to come to him upon his first sending, since it was in his Power to advance him: But *Balaam*, to excuse himself, let him know what Restraint the Lord had laid upon him. Then entertaining him publickly with his Princes and great Men that Day, the next Day he brought him up into the ^m High Places of ⁿ *Baal*, that from thence he might take a View of the Camp of *Israel*. Whilst they were here, the Prophet directs the

^m *High Places.* The Scripture calls *High*, those Eminencies and Groves which the idolatrous Nations consecrated to their Gods, and where they in a brutish and lascivious Manner, solac'd themselves.

ⁿ *Baal.* Some will have the Temple of

Baal to be in those High Places, others the Statue. As to the Word *Baal*, it is sometimes a proper Name (as here in this Place,) sometimes it is the common Name of Idols: Thus the *Phenicians* called their God *Baal*. The *Babylonians* theirs *Beli*, or *Belus*; which is the same.

King to order ° seven Altars to be erected for him there; and seven Oxen with seven Rams to be prepared. Which being done, they both together offered an Ox and a Ram upon each Altar. Then leaving *Balak* to stand by his Burnt-Offering, *Balaam* withdrew to consult the Lord, who meets and instructs him what to say; and returning to *Balak*, whom he found standing at the Altar, and the Princes of *Moab* with him, he thus address'd himself to them: "Thou hast caused me, " O King, to come from *Aram*, out of the Mountains of the East, to curse the Family of *Jacob*, and " bid Defiance to *Israel*. But how shall I curse those, " whom God hath not cursed? and how shall I defy " those, whom the Lord hath not defied? From the " top of the Rocks I see their Protector, and from the " Hills I behold him. Behold, this People shall be separated to God, and distinguish'd from all other People in Religion, Laws, and course of Life: They shall " not be reckon'd among the Nations." Then setting forth the Prosperity and Increase of *Israel*, he wish'd that his Lot might be with them in Life and Death.

Balak was offended at this Answer, and in a passionate Haste asks, "What hast thou done? I sent for thee to " curse my Enemies, and thou hast blessed them." *Balaam* excused himself by the Necessity of his Instructions, from which at this time it was not in his Power to deviate. However *Balak* is not discouraged, from the Change of the Place he hopes a Change of Fortune, or better Success; and therefore taking *Balaam* into the Field of *Zophim* to the Top of *Pisgab*, he tries whether

° Seven. The Number Seven was esteemed sacred among the *Israelites*, (from whom probably *Balaam* might have learnt it) as appears in *Lev. iv. 6.* where the Priest is said to sprinkle the Blood of the Bullock seven times before the Veil of the Sanctuary.

Aram. The same as *Mesopotamia*, which the *Hebrews* call *Aram Naharaim*.

Excus'd. From *Balaam's* Excuse, *Numb. xxiii. 12.* some interpret, as if he

would have cursed the *Israelites*, if he could: And indeed if we consider what *Moses* told the *Israelites*, *Dent. xxiii. 5.* Nevertheless, the Lord thy God would not hearken unto *Balaam*, but turned the Curse into a Blessing to thee; we may well conclude, that *Balaam* did earnestly labour with God by Persuasion or Intreaty to have had Liberty to have cursed the Children of *Israel*.

he can curse from thence. *Balaam*, who was willing to please him, had seven Altars there, and a Bullock and a Ram offered on each. Then withdrawing again, as before, to consult the Lord, he received fresh Instructions. *Balak* now began to understand the Interview between the Lord and *Balaam*, and upon his Return to him and his Attendants, who were big with expectation of the Result; demanded what the Lord had spoken? Upon which *Balaam*, to bespeak the greater Attention and Regard to what he should say, began thus. "Consider, "O *Balak*, thou Son of *Zippor*, consider, that God, "who hath already blessed *Israel*, and forbidden me to "curse them, is not like Man, that he should re- "nounce his Promise, or repent of what he does. Hath "he promised, and shall he not perform? Or hath he "spoken, and shall he not make it good? Behold I have "received Commission to bless, and he hath blessed, and "I cannot reverse it. "He does not approve of Afflictions

He does, &c. These Words in *Numb.* xxiii. 21. are render'd thus: *He hath seen none Iniquity in Jacob, nor Transgression in Israel.* Which cannot be the true Sense of the Place, for they give occasion to *Liberlines* to imagine that God looks with Indifference on the Sins of Men, when they are thus render'd. Others think that he overlooks and winks at the Sins of his own People; and the most judicious and pious are puzzled what to make of them, as appears from the various Explication which is given them. Some think that by Iniquity, &c. *Balaam* understands Idols, which the *Hebrews*, often call, Vanity, Iniquity, Falshood and Perverseness. But this Sense can have no Place here; because God had not only seen Idols among the *Israelites*, but had also most severely punished them for having them, *Exod.* xxxii. 9. *Deut.* ix. 13. Others think they signify great and heinous Crimes, which abounded among the *Heathens*, and were not to be found among the *Israelites*. But neither is this true, for God upbraids them frequently with the greatest Enormities, and their least Faults were so much the more heinous, because they were the *People of God*. In fine, some fancy that 'tis said, he doth not behold their Iniquity and Perverseness, because he had pardoned

them, as if he had never seen them. But these are wide of the Meaning. We must therefore observe with *Gataker*, and several others, that the *Hebrew* Words which are render'd, *beheld* and *seen*, don't only signify a bare Sight of Things, (for in this Sense, God sees the greatest Crimes, as well as the best Actions) but also seeing them with Approbation. 'Thus 'tis said, That God looketh on the Contrite, and is of purer Eyes than that he can behold Evil, *Isa.* lxvi. 2. *Hab.* i. 13. That is, That he approveth the Contrite. but cannot approve Sin. We must likewise observe that the *Hebrew* Particle *Beth*, which we translate *in*, frequently signifies *against*, as *Exodus* xx. 16. — *against thy Neighbour.* And *Numb.* xii. 1. — *against Moses.* So likewise in several other Places. We must yet further remark, that the Words which are translated Iniquity and Perverseness, do often signify an Outrage and Vexation, or Affliction and Trouble. The Text then should be render'd, *He does not approve Afflictions or Outrages against the Posterity of Jacob, nor of Vexation or Trouble against the Posterity of Israel.* This is very agreeable to all that *Balaam* said and did on this Occasion, and stops the Mouths of *Liberlines* and *Enthusiasts.* R 3 ons

“ons or Outrages against the Posterity of *Jacob*, nor
 “of Vexation or Trouble against the Posterity of *Israel*,
 “The Lord his God is with him, and the ^t Shout of a
 “King is in him. God hath brought him out of *Egypt*;
 “he hath, as it were, the Strength of an ^t Unicorn.
 “Surely no Inchantment can prevail against *Jacob*, nor
 “any Divination against *Israel*. So that considering
 “what God shall work this Time for the Deliverance
 “of his People, all the World shall wonder and say,
 “What hath God wrought! Who hath put his People
 “out of the Reach of Fraud or Force, and turned the
 “intended Curse into a Blessing. And to shew their fu-
 “ture Strength and Success, the People shall rise up as
 “a great Lion, and lift up themselves as a young Lion:
 “They shall not lie down until they eat of the Prey, and
 “drink of the Blood of the Slain.” This was such a
 Mortification to *Balak*, that he silences *Balaam*, for-
 bidding him either to curse or bless. But his Eagerness
 to have *Israel* cursed, made him change his Mind: For
 he calls for *Balaam*, and intreats him to try another Place,
 in hopes God would permit him to curse *Israel*. Here-
 upon *Balaam* followed *Balak* to the Top of Mount *Peor*,
 a Hill that look’d towards the Wilderness. Whatsoever
 Ground *Balak* might have for his Hopes, it’s certain *Ba-
 laam* knew the positive Will of God in this Case was to
 bless and not to curse; and this he had declared to be ir-
 reversible, when he told *Balak* God was not like fickle
 Man: Yet stimulated with the blind Desire of Reward,
 he consents to *Balak* to tempt the Lord afresh; for he
 there erected seven Altars, and laid seven Sacrifices there-
 on. But having in vain tried all his Arts of ^u Divination,
 and seeing that God was resolved to continue blessing *Is-
 rael*, without withdrawing, as before, (under Pretence
 to consult the Lord) looking on the Camp of *Israel*, the

^t Shout. So *Jerome*, *Arias Montanus*,
Tremellius and *Junius* turn it. That is,
 the Triumph of a King victorious over
 his Enemies.

^t Unicorn. This Animal (generally
 supposed to be the *Rhinoceros*) is frequent-

ly us’d to express extraordinary Strength:
 As here, *Numb.* xxiii. 22. *Psal.* xxix. 6.
Job xxxix. 12. *Dent.* xxxiii. 17. *Psal.*
 xxii. 21. and xcii. 11. &c.

^u Divination. See *Numb.* xxiv. 1.

Book II.

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NUMBERS CHAP. XXIV.²²
Balaam blesses Israel.



NUMBERS 24. Verse 3.

*And he took up his parable, and said,
Balaam the son of Beor hath said and
the man whose eyes are open, hath said.*
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Book I

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“ Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he cried out in an Extasy, “How good are thy Tents, O *Jacob*, and “thy Tabernacles, O *Israel*!” Then by significant Metaphors he foretold the Extent, Fertility and Strength of *Israel*, and that those that blessed them should be blessed, and those that cursed them should be cursed.

Balak inrag’d to see that *Balaam*, whom he had called to curse the People of *Israel*, had blessed them three several Times, and *smiting his Hands together, upbraided *Balaam* with having deceived him, in blessing those, whom he was sent for to curse. Then being no longer able to restrain his Rage, he bid him haste and be gone; “For, I thought (said he) to have promoted thee to “great Honour, if thou hadst answer’d my Design in “cursing *Israel*; but the Lord hath hindered thy Pre-“ferment.” *Balaam* had recourse to his old Excuse, that he could not exceed the Commands of the Lord, but must speak what he put into his Mouth: And tho’ he was willing to gratify the King of *Moab* in some sort, and perhaps (considering his covetous Temper) to intitle himself to some Reward, he offer’d to y advertise him now at parting, what the *Israelites* should do to his People in the later Days: But still, against his own Inclination, he bestowed Blessings on *Israel*, and prophesied, a Star should come forth from *Jacob*, and a Rod from *Israel*; that it should smite the Chiefs of *Moab*, and destroy the Children of *Seth*; that *Edom* should fall under its Power, and that the *Amalekites* and *Kenites* should be extirpated. In fine, he foretold, that the Western Nations, the *Greeks* and *Romans*, should vanquish the *Assyrians*, destroy the *Hebrews*, and perish themselves.

After these Predictions, as if vex’d at his own Disappointment in missing the Reward he expected, and to be reveng’d on the *Israelites* as the Occasion of it, he

* Spirit. In *Numb.* xxiii. it is observable, that while *Balaam* us’d his Art of Divination or Inchantment, he had only a Word put into his Mouth; but now having laid aside his Inchantments, the Spirit of God came upon him.

* Smiting, &c. This was a great Token of Displeasure, as smiting the Breast was of Sorrow.

y Advertise. See *Numb.* xxiv. 14. But that this was in Revenge, is plain from the next Note.

^a instructs the *Moabites* and *Midianites* in a wicked Artifice; which was to send their Daughters to the Camp of the *Israelites*, to draw those People into Idolatry; the sure Method to deprive them of the Assistance of God, who protected them. This Artifice succeeded, for the very next Account we have of the *Israelites* is, that they lay incamp'd at ^a *Shittim*; where many of them were deluded by the *Moabitish* and *Midianitish* Women, and were drawn in, not only to commit Whoredom with them, but to assist at their Sacrifices, and worship their Gods, even ^b *Baal-Peor*.

The Greatness of this Sin appears in the Severity of the Punishment: For God commanded *Moses* to take the Chiefs of those that had joined themselves to *Baal-Peor*, and hang them up before the Lord in the Sight of all the People. *Moses* accordingly gave Charge to the ^c Judges of *Israel* to see Execution done, every one on the Men under his Charge, that sacrificed to *Baal-Peor*. But the divine Justice did not stop here. Their Whoredom must be punished as well as their Idolatry; which was aggravated vastly by a Person of considerable Worth and Dignity. Bold *Zimri*, the Son of *Salu*, Prince of a chief House among the *Simeonites*, took *Cozbi* the Daughter of *Zur*, who was also a Prince of a chief House in *Midian*, and daringly brought her to the *Israelitish* Camp, in Contempt of *Moses*, and in Sight of all the Congregation, who, because of the late Execution done upon their Princes, stood weeping before the Door of the Tabernacle; and leading her openly into his Tent,

^a *Instructs*. After *Balaam* had given *Balak* what Hints he could concerning the Ruin of his People by the *Israelites*, which was no very comfortable Admonition; (for he did not at the same Time instruct him how to avoid that Ruin) by Way of Revenge puts them in a Way to render the People of *Israel* odious to their God, and taught *Balak* how to betray *Israel*, and draw them into Fornication and Idolatry, which soon after followed. This indeed is not mentioned in *Numb. xxiv.* where this Passage or

Interview between *Balak* and *Balaam* ends; but *Moses* in *Ch. xxxi. v. 16.* doth plainly refer to the Counsel of *Balaam*, and lays the whole Blame on him.

^a *Shittim*. Which signifies, *Turning aside*.
^b *Baal-Peor*. Supposed to be the heathen *Priapus*.^a

^c *Judges*. I suppose these were those Judges, whom by the Advice of his Father-in-Law *Jethro*, with God's Approbation, he had set over the People, *Exod. xviii.*

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there lay with her. This superlative Impudence, and open Violation of God's Law, none offer to resent, but *Phineas*, *Aaron's* Grandson; who rising up from the Congregation, and fill'd with a divine Zeal, took a Javelin in his Hand and followed them to the Tent; where in the very Act of Whoredom he thrust them both through. This zealous Act of *Phineas* put a stop to the Plague, which God had sent among the People for this audacious Act of *Zimri's*, and the other Lewdnesses and Impieties of his Comrades. However, there died on this Occasion no less than ^d four and twenty thousand. *Phineas's* holy Zeal for God's Honour gain'd him not only high Commendation, but a perpetual Settlement of the Priesthood in himself and his Posterity.

These Disorders thus quieted, and the Offenders punished, the next thing was to take Vengeance of the *Midianites*, who had debauch'd the *Israelites* with their Idolatry and Whoredoms. ^f In order to which *Moses* commanded a Detachment of twelve thousand select Men, a thousand out of every Tribe, to go against

^d Four, &c. In this Number, it is probable, *Moses* does include the Thousand Princes that were hanged. Which Computation reconciles this Place to that of the Apostle, 1 Cor. x. 8. where he mentions but three and twenty thousand, without the thousand Princes that were hanged.

^e *Midianites*. Under this Name I take the *Moabites* also to be comprehended.

^f In order. In *Numb. xxv. 16.* God commanded *Moses* to vex the *Midianites* for betraying *Israel*, and to smite them. But the Execution of this Order is interrupted by some Things, which being not strictly Historical, we will here in the Notes give a short Hint of them. After the Plague the Lord commanded that the People, that is, the Males, should again be number'd. In which the same Method was appointed to be taken that was used in the former Numbering, *Numb. i.* For the other Tribes, being number'd with respect to War, and to their possessing the Land, were number'd from twenty Years old: But the *Levites* being exempted from War, and excluded from

Possessions, were number'd from a Month old. The Account of this is set down at large in *Numb. xxvi.* by which it appears, that of all that were first number'd by *Moses* and *Aaron* in the Wilderness of *Sinai*, *Numb. i.* there was not then a Man left alive, besides *Moses*, *Joshua*, and *Caleb*. So that in less than forty Years, Six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty grown Men (for so many were number'd, *Ch. i.* besides the Tribe of *Levi*) died in the Wilderness. And yet now at this second Numbering there were found six hundred and one thousand, seven hundred and thirty Men of twenty Years old and upwards, besides *Levites*.

The next thing is an Enumeration of divers Laws and Ordinances; some of which were more general, as relating to the daily Burnt-Offerings, and other Offerings upon particular Festivals. Some were more particular, as private Vows of Maids, Wives, Widows, and divorced Persons, and the settling of Inheritances in the Female Line. Of which, see from *Numb. xxviii.* to *xxx.*

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the *Midianites*; amongst whom went the zealous *Phineas*, who carried with him the holy Instruments, or Trumpets to animate the People. This was indeed but a small Army to invade so great and powerful a People. But God, who put them upon this Expedition, went along with them, and bless'd them with such wonderful Success, that they slew five Kings, and all their Men; among whom was the wicked Prophet & *Balaam*, who tho' he had before scap'd the Angel's sword, yet now fell a Sacrifice to the injur'd People of God. They burn'd all the Cities and Castles, took all the Women and Children Prisoners, and seiz'd on their Cattle, Flocks, and Goods: After which, loaded with the Spoils of their Enemies, they return in Triumph to the *Israelitish* Camp. In the way Home they are met by *Moses*, *Eleazer* the High-Priest, and all the Princes; who congratulate their Success. But *Moses* seeing the *Midianitish* Women among the Captives, was much offended at the Officers of the Army for saving them; for these, said he, by the Council of *Balaam*, caused the *Israelites* to sin against the Lord in the Business of *Peor*, and provoked him to send a Plague upon the Congregation of *Israel*. And thereupon he commanded them to kill every Male among the Children, and every Woman that had lain with Man; and to save none alive but the Virgin Females. After which they were to abide seven Days without the Camp, and both Soldiers and Spoils pass through the Ceremonies of a legal Purification: Which when they had perform'd, God directed *Moses* to take an Account of the whole Prey, and dividing it into two equal Parts, to give one to the Soldiers who had taken it, and the other Part among the rest of the People that stay'd at home. Out of the Soldiers Part he levied the Five hundredth Part, both of Persons and Beasts; which he paid as a Tribute to *Eleazer* the Priest, for a Heave-Offering

* *Balaam*. By this it seems he was not got home; and it may be, with Reason, conjectur'd, that he was devising much the same Mischief against the *Hebrews*, whilst he was among the *Midianites*, as when he was among the *Moabites*; and therefore he justly fell by the Sword of *Israel*.

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of the Lord; and out of the other Part, which the People had, one Part out of fifty of both Persons and Beasts was given to the *Levites*. Then the Officers of the Army out of the other Parts of the Booty which they had taken, as Jewels of Gold, Bracelets, Rings, Earrings and Tablets, brought their expiatory Offering to atone for their Transgression in saving the *Midianitish* Women, and their gratulatory Offering of Thanksgiving for so great a Victory. The Greatness of which may be guess'd from the Number of their Prisoners and Cattle; the Virgin Females were two and thirty thousand, all the rest of the People, Men, Women and Children, were put to the Sword. The Plunder in Cattle and Flocks consisted of Six hundred seventy and five thousand Sheep, seventy and two thousand Beeves, and sixty one thousand Asses; besides rich Goods and Ornaments. And to make this still more great and miraculous, the Victory was gain'd without the Loss of one Man on *Israel's* Side, as appears from the Report the Officers made upon a^h Muster.

The *Israelites* thus taking Possession of the Country on this side *Jordan*, the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, observing it to be a fertile Soil, and good Pasturage, desired of *Moses* that they might settle in that Country, upon Condition that they should march with the other Tribes to conquer the Land where they were to settle, that they would not return till the others were in Possession, and that they would claim no Part of the Lands that were beyond *Jordan*. *Moses* at first thought they intended to venture no further, but had a Mind to sit down in a Country ready gain'd, and leave their Brethren the rest of the Tribes: Upon which he blamed them for offering by such a Proposal to discourage the rest of the *Israelites*. But when he understood their real Design, upon condition they perform'd their Promise, he granted their Request.

^h Muster. See *Numb.* xxxi. 49.

After

ⁱ After this *Moses* gives a particular Account of the several Stations and Removes, which the Children of *Israel* made from *Rameses* in *Egypt*, to the River *Jordan* in *Canaan*. Then he describes the Bounds of the promised Land, and gives the Names of the Persons appointed to divide it among the Tribes of *Israel*. And afterwards Order is given, that the Children of *Israel* should assign to the *Levites* eight and forty Cities, with Suburbs to them, in which the *Levites* might live amongst the Tribes, and of which Number six were appointed to be Cities of Refuge for the Man-slayer to fly to, who had happened to kill a Man by Chance. But Provision was made, that he, who should be duly convicted of wilful Murder, should be put to Death: And in capital Cases it was provided, that none should be convicted of such Crimes by the Evidence of one single Man. There was a Law likewise made, that every Daughter, who should possess an Inheritance in any Tribe of the Children of *Israel*, should be married to one of the Tribe of her Father, that so the Children of *Israel* might enjoy every one the Inheritance of his Father; and the Inheritance not be transferred to another Tribe. This was grounded upon a Law made ^k before, which empower'd Daughters to inherit Lands, where the Heirs Male should be deficient; and was the Case of *Zelophebad's* Daughters, who upon obtaining this Act were required to marry within the Family of their ^l Father's Tribe.

By this time the forty Years Travel of the *Israelites* was near expired. *Moses* therefore considering that the present Generation of the *Israelites*, now ready to pass over *Jordan* to take Possession of the promised Land, were either sprung up since the Law was gi-

ⁱ After. The Matter of this Paragraph is contain'd in *Numb. Ch. xxxiii, xxxiv, xxxv.*

^k Before. See *Numb. xxvii. 1, 2, &c.*

^l Father's. Upon this, they are said, *Numb. xxxvi. 11.* to be married to their Father's Brother's Sons. That is, as it is explain'd

in *vers. 12.* They were married into the Families, or some that were of the Families of *Manassah*, the Son of *Joseph*. Which takes off the Force of their Argument, who from hence would infer the Lawfulness of Marriages between First-Cousins.

ven at Mount *Sinai*, near forty Years before, or too young to remember and understand the Law then given, thought fit to repeat the Law to them.

A little before his Death therefore he assembled the People of *Israel* on the first Day of the eleventh Month, in the fortieth Year from their Departure out of *Egypt*, (the People being yet in the Plains of *Moab* by *Jordan*, and near *Jericho*) he repeated to them briefly ^a all that had befallen their Fathers since they left *Egypt*: The gracious Dealings of God with them; their Unruliness, Disobedience, and Rebellions, which had so often provoked the Lord to punish them, and brought not only upon them, but by their Means upon him also, that grievous Sentence, That they should not enter into the good Land. Which Account he often repeats, that these might take Warning by the Miscarriages of their Forefathers. Then he repeated the ^a Decalogue, and divers other Laws and Precepts formerly given, tho' not without some Variations, with the Addition of some new Laws on divers Subjects, and Explanations of the Old, exhorting them to a strict Observation of them, promising they should soon enter the Land of *Canaan*, and commanded them to destroy all the Idols of the Inhabitants of the Country, and to extirpate the People. He encourag'd them to be faithful to God, assuring them, if they kept his Commandments they should have Blessings heap'd upon them; and threatening them with all manner of Calamities, if they departed from them. He renew'd the Covenant with the People in the Name of the Lord; commanded them with a loud Voice to proclaim on the Mountains of *Gerezim* and *Hebal*, beyond *Jordan*, Blessings to those who kept the Covenant, and Curses to all those who broke it, and to erect an Altar in the Land of *Canaan*, on which they should write the Terms and Conditions of their Covenant with God. These things, with Rehearsals sometimes

^a *All.* See from *Deut.* i. to iv.

^a *Decalogue.* *Ibid.* Ch. v.

of their Fathers, and their own ° Prevarications, *Moses* not only delivered to the People by Word of Mouth, but wrote them in a Book; which he gave into the Custody and Care of the *Levites*, with Direction from the Lord, that they should put it into the side of the Ark, to be kept there for a Witness against *Israel*, if they should rebel. Besides this, *Moses* by the immediate Direction of God composed a P Song, in which are at large described by the many Benefits and Favours of God to his People, their Ingratitude to, and Forgetfulness of him; the Punishments by which he corrected them, with Threatnings of greater Judgments if they persisted to provoke him by a Repetition of their Follies. This Song *Moses* recited to the People, and gave Order that they should learn it, and repeat it often; that when for their transgressing the Law, many Calamities and Troubles should befall them, this Song might be a Witness for God against them.

The Time was just now approaching, and the People ready to pass over *Jordan*; but the Lord having before told *Moses*, that he should not conduct the People into the promised Land, because of his Error at the Waters of *Meribah*, he bid him now get him up into the Mountain *Abarim* unto the Mount *Nebo* in the Land of *Moab*, over against *Jericho*, and take a View of the Land of *Canaan*, and then die there in that Mount, as his Brother *Aaron* had died in Mount *Hor*.

Moses had before indeavoured to deprecate one Part of his Sentence, his not being permitted to enter into the promised Land, but in vain; he therefore humbly submits to the Almighty's Pleasure now, and takes a solemn Farewel of the People in a prophetick Blessing, which he pronounc'd upon each Tribe, as *Jacob* had done just before his Death. And having before by God's Command appointed *Joshua* to be his Successor, to conduct the People to the promised Land, laying his Hands upon

° Prevarications, *Ibid.* See from *Ch.* P Song, *Ibid.* *Ch.* xxxii
iv. to *Ch.* xxxi,

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DEUTERONOMY CHAP. XXXIV.

Moses dies on mount Nebo.



DEUTERONOMY 34. Verse 5.

So Moses the Servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD.

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him in such solemn and publick Manner, as gave all the People to understand, that after *Moses's* Death *Joshua* was to be their Leader, *Moses* went up to the Top of *Pisgab* over against *Jericho*, from whence, as the Lord had promised him, he could take a full View of the Countries round about.

Tho' his End was just approaching, and he an Hundred and twenty Years old, yet he was in such good Health and full Strength, that neither was his Eye dim, nor his natural Force abated; therefore whilst these lasted, he with Pleasure surveys the beauteous Prospect. He views the delightful Town and Plains of *Jericho*; sees *Lebanon's* fair Cliffs and lofty Cedars, and then resigns his Soul into the Hands of *Seraphs*, who waited to convey him to a happier *Canaan*, than what he had just before survey'd.

The Lord, who knew the wanton Inclination of the *Israelites* to Idolatry, lest they, when they remember'd the wonderful things *Moses* had perform'd for them, should pay any superstitious Adoration to his Remains after Death, paid the funeral Honours to this great Prophet himself, and in a Valley in the Land of *Moab* over against *Beth-Peor* buried him so secretly, that no Man ever knew where his Sepulchre was. And though he had no publick Monument or Tomb-stone erected, yet this stands as an honourable Epitaph on him recorded in holy Scripture, *Deut.* xxxiv. 10, 11, 12.

*What Prophet by the sacred Breath inspir'd,
What Friend of God with holy Raptures fir'd,
Whose deathless Name can equal Glories share,
Or with God's Servant Moses can compare?
With mortal Eyes th' Invisible he saw,
On trembling Sinai's Top receiv'd the Law:
From Egypt's Fetters ransom'd Israel brought,
And in their Sight great Signs and mighty Wonders wrought.*

Thus

Thus died that illustrious Prophet * *Moses*; whose Death, when the Children of *Israel* understood, they lamented with great Solemnity, weeping and mourning for him in the Plains of *Moab* thirty Days.

* *Moses*. Thus far the sacred History was of *Moses's* Inditing, which contains the five first Books of the Bible, and is thence called the *Pentateuch*. All Antiquity, both sacred and profane, acknowledge *Moses* to have been the Legislator of the *Jews*; and that whole Nation has always carefully preserved his Books as containing their Law. When the Tribes were divided into two Kingdoms, both of them preserved the same Respect for those Books, as being writ by him. The *Samaritans*, who came afterwards, received them from the *Israelite* Priests; the *Jews* carried them to *Babylon*, when they were led Captives thither; they brought them back, and afterwards revised and corrected them. Profane Authors have spoke of them, as written by *Moses*. In short, it is as certain, that the Books which go by the Name of *Moses* are his own, as that those which are ascribed to *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, &c. appertain to those, whose Names they bear. It is possible there may have been some Additions and Alterations made in them; but the Bulk of the History and the Laws could not be altered. As to the Truth of the History we have several Proofs. 1. It is the most ancient History in the World; for whether *Moses* was contemporary with *Inachus* the first King of *Argos*, who liv'd Six hundred Years before the War of *Troy*; or whether he did not live till the Time of

Cecrops King of *Athens*, who reigned three hundred Years before that War, it is certain he is much ancients than *Homer* or *Hesiod*, or any profane Writer. 2. *Moses* is the only Person that has given a plain and historical Account of the Origin of the World, and who has continued that History uniform, and without any Interruption to his own Time. All that others have written of the first Ages is, as they own themselves, mere Ignorance, Darkness, and Fable. 3. *Moses* wrote at a Time, when he could be sure of the Truth of what he wrote, and when it might have been easy to have convicted him of Falshood, had he delivered any Fables. 4. We have nothing in ancient History, nor in Fable, to prove that the World is older than *Moses* represents it. 5. His History agrees with the profane Historians of several Nations. We there find the Originals of several Nations, and their ancient Names which many of them have preserved. But if Religion did not convince us, that the Books of *Moses* were written by divine Inspiration, yet Reason ought to persuade us, that this History of *Moses* is true, and the only one, wherein we can find when the World began, and how long it has lasted. As for the last Chapter of *Deuteronomy* it was written by *Joshua*, as a Preparation to his History, and could not be supposed to be written by *Moses*, as giving an Account of his Death.



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BOOK III.



UPON the Death of *Moses*, *Joshua* by the Command of God undertakes the Charge of the Children of *Israel*. He had been Prime Minister to *Moses* for the greatest part of those forty Years the *Israelites* wander'd in the Wilderness; had seen the wonderful Works God wrought by *Moses*; understood well the Nature and Disposition of the People; was one of the twelve Spies which were sent to search the promised Land, and one of the two that gave a just Report of it, in Opposition to the other ten Spies that gave an evil and false Account of it. For these and other Qualifications, he was formally installed into his Office with very solemn Ceremonies; *Moses* having, by God's Command, presented him before

fore *Eleazar* the Priest, laid his Hand upon him, and disposed to him ^a some of the Honour that was upon himself, in the Sight of the whole Congregation.

Being now ready to enter and take Possession of the promis'd Land, God for *Joshua's* greater Incouragement strengthen'd his former Commission, by giving him a more immediate and express Command, as he had before done to his Servant ^r *Moses*, to lead the People over *Jordan*; telling him, that every place, upon which the Sole of their Foot should tread, should be their own; and assuring him, that there should not any Man be able to stand before him all the Days of his Life: For as he had been with *Moses*, so he would be with him, and never fail nor forsake him: Therefore he bid him be strong and of good Courage, for he should divide the Land for an Inheritance to the People. And to engage him to a Performance of the Law, which he had delivered to *Moses*, he annexes a continual Series of Prosperity and Success; charging him to make it his Study Day and Night, as the Standard of all his future Actions, and repeating his former Assurance of his Presence with him whereloever he went.

Joshua upon this Incouragement prepares to put the Command of the Lord in Execution; and, that nothing material might be omitted, he orders the Officers to go thro' the Camp and give Notice to the People, that within three Days they should pass the *Jordan*, in order to possess the Land which the Lord their God had given them, and that they should provide themselves with Victuals for such a March.

The City of *Jericho* was just opposite to the place

^a *Sams, &c.* See *Numb.* xxvii. 20.

^r *Moses.* God spake now to *Joshua* by his Angel, as he had done to *Moses*, when he gave him the Law upon Mount *Sinai*, as appears from *Gal.* iii. 19. For Angels are the ministring Spirits of God, *Heb.* i. 14. For which Reason, as often as it is said in the old Testament, that

God appeared or spoke to any one, it

must be understood, that he doth it not by himself, but by his Angel.

Besides, the Angel here speaking to *Joshua*, may be said to speak either by spiritual Locution, objecting to his Mind the Notions of these Words, so as if *Joshua* had heard God speaking to him; or by corporal Locution, assuming an apparent Body: Either of which is probable.

where

where they were to pass. *Joshua* therefore, ^t before his Order for their making Provision for this March, sent two Spies thither to observe the Situation and Strength of the Place, and the Avenues to it; because it would be the first Place they were to attack, after they had pass'd the River. These ^t Spies entering *Jericho*, went to a publick House of Entertainment, which was kept by, ^u *Rahab*, and there took up their Lodging. But being observ'd by some to go in there, Information is presently given to the King of *Jericho*, that two *Israelites* were come to search the Country. Upon this the King sent to *Rahab* to produce them; but she having timely Notice, had hid them upon the ^w Roof of the House, under the Stalks of Flax which she had spread there. Having thus secur'd the Men, she put off the King's Messengers with a feigned Story, pretending that some Men did come to her House, but she knew not what they were, nor whence they came; and that when it grew dark, before the Gates were shut, they went out, but she knew not whither. And to prevent any farther Suspicion, she advised to pursue them quickly, for they could not be far off. Upon this they sent out several to take them, who went as far as the Fords of *Jordan*, but in vain.

^t *Before*. This Direction for Marching is mentioned in the Text, before the sending the Spies to *Jericho*. See *Josh. i. 11.* and *Ch. ii. 1.* But it seems the Spies were sent before that, and returned to the Camp at *Shittim*, before they took their March towards *Jordan*: For the Spies spent longer Time in their Search, than was between the Notice given for Marching and the March, which was but three Days: Whereas they lay hid three Days in the Mountains for their Safety, besides the Time they spent in *Jericho*, and in going and returning; which they could not have done, had they been sent away, before the Order for Marching was given. So that what is delivered in the second Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, should in order of Time come in about the Middle of the first Chapter between the Ninth and Tenth Verses, being as *Junius* and *Tremellius* observe, displaced by a Figure called *Hyperbaton*.

^t *Spies*. These Spies are fabulously sup-

pos'd by the *Rabbins* to be *Phineas* and *Caleb*; which is very improbable. For *Phineas* was designed by God to be a Priest, and *Caleb* a Man in great Authority. But *Josh. vi. 23.* positively says they were young Men.

^u *Rahab*. Interpreters are at great Variance about the Quality of this Woman; most agreeing, she was an Hostess, which is very probable; and that she is render'd an Harlot upon the Account of Idolatry; for it is a common Phrase in Scripture to say, — *Go a Whoring after other Gods*. That she was a Victualler is unquestionable.

^w *Roof*. The Roofs of Houses were then built flat, so that they could walk upon them, and set there Goods there, having Battlements round them to secure them from falling off, *Dent. xxii. 8.* And such a Roof it was that *David* afterwards walked upon, when he unhappily espied the fair *Bathsheba* bathing her self, *2 Sam. xi. 2.*

When

When they were gone, *Rahab* went up to the Men she had hid, and thus accosts them: "I know the Lord hath given you this Land, and the Fame of you is become so terrible to us, that our People are utterly discouraged. For we have heard, how the Lord dried up the Water of the *Red Sea* for you to pass over, when ye came out of *Egypt*; and how ye subdued *Sihon* and *Og*, the two *Amorite* Kings, on the other side of *Jordan*. These Actions have flash'd Terror amongst our People, and quite dispirited them. Your God is the only God in Heaven and Earth. Now therefore, in regard of the Service I have done in concealing you, shew Favour to me and my Family, when you come into Power, and save us alive; and of this ye shall give me some Assurance." They readily promise upon their Lives to secure her and all that belong'd to her; upon which she let them down by a Cord from the Window, which fac'd the Country, for her House stood on the Town Wall. When they were down, she advis'd them to make to the Mountains to avoid the Pursuers, and to conceal themselves three Days, till the Search was over. The Spies seeing the Sincerity of the Woman in consulting their Security, resolve to make her easy in their Promise to her; and for a Token of their Integrity in the Performance of it, give her this farther Assurance. When she should see the *Israelitish* Army approach the Town, they bid her be sure to tie a * scarlet Twine in the Window, thro' which she let them down; and to bring her Father, Mother, Brethren, and all her Family home to her, and be careful to keep them within Doors, that when their Forces should enter the Town, by this Token they might distinguish the House and spare them. And that if any should straggle from the House, their Blood should be upon their own Heads; but if any one in the House should come

* *Scarlet*. This being a Token of Deliverance to *Rahab* and her Family, is not unaptly reckoned a Type of the Blood of Christ, by which we are delivered from

the Death of Soul and Body. This is the Opinion of several Fathers, particularly *St. Ambrose* and *St. Augustine*.

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JOSHUA CHAP. II.

The spies let down by a cord.

44



JOSHUA 2. Verse 15.

*Then she let them down by a cord thro
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wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. 260.*

to any Damage, they would answer for it. To these Terms she gladly agreed, and so dismiss'd them.

The Spies having hitherto thus happily succeeded, take *Rahab's* Advice, and make the best of their Way to the Mountains, where they lay hid three Days; in which time, those that went in Pursuit of them despairing to find them, return'd to *Jericho*; and the Spies descending from the Mountains ford over *Jordan*, arrive safe in the *Israelitish* Camp, and give *Joshua* their General a faithful Account of their Expedition; adding, that for certain the Lord had delivered the Country into their Hands, for the People were quite dispirited at the Fame of them.

Joshua rous'd at this News decamps from *Shittim*, and draws down to the *Jordan*: Then putting the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, in mind of the Agreement made between *Moses* and them, that they, leaving their Families and Cattle on this side *Jordan*, should with their best Forces go over arm'd before their Brethren, to help subdue their Enemies, and place them in their Possessions, they acknowledge the Agreement, and declare their Readiness to go; promising in all things to be subject to him their General, as they had been to *Moses*, and in all things to obey his Commands, under Penalty of Death.

The Army being provided of Necessaries for their March, the Officers going thro' the Host commanded the People, that when they should see the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord their God, and the Priests of the *Levites* bearing it, then they should move and follow it, that they might know the Way by which they were to go, because they had never before passed that Way. And that a Decency might be observ'd in their March, Direction was given, that they should leave a Space of about ^y two thousand Cubits between the Ark and them.

S 3

Things

^y Two thousand. There were two thousand Cubits between the Ark and the Camp when they marched, *Josh. iii. 4.* and in all probability the same Proportion was observed when they rested: This Distance of Ground some interpret to be one

Things being thus disposed, *Joshua* early in the Morning on the ninth Day of the first Month exhorted the People to sanctify themselves, because the Lord would next Day do wonders amongst them; and giving Order for the Priests to move, they took up the Ark, and march'd with it before the People to the Banks of the *Jordan*, where they halted: Here the Lord told *Joshua* that he would so distinguish him in the Sight of all *Israel*, that they should know his Presence should be with him, as it had been with *Moses*. He directed him to bid the Priests, who were to carry the Ark, stop upon the Brink of the River; which they did, and *Joshua* thereupon calling the People together to hear the Words of the Lord their God, told them, That they should hereby know, that the living God was amongst them, and would drive out the Nations before them: For the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the Earth passing into the River *Jordan* before them, as soon as the Feet of the Priests that bare it should touch the Waters, they should divide and stand on a Heap. Accordingly the Priests march into the River with the Ark, and stopping in the midst of it, they stood on firm Ground, the rapid Stream dividing, and the Waters forgetting their Fluidity, condense in heaps to afford them a dry Passage. Thus did God make good his Word to *Joshua*, in promising to magnify him in the Sight of the People, by dividing the Waters of the *Jordan*, as he had done before to *Moses*, when the *Israelites* pass'd the *Red Sea*.

But before the People cross'd the River, the Lord commanded *Joshua* to select twelve Men, one out of each Tribe, who, so soon as the People had pass'd the River, were to take up twelve Stones from the place where the Priests stood on dry Ground, according to the Number of the twelve Tribes, and to set them

one Mile, some two; some measuring it according to a less, others according to a longer Cubit, which they term a Geometrical Cubit. But all agree in this, that these two thousand Cubits were a Sab-

bath-Day's Journey; because on the Sabbath-Day they were all to repair to the Place of God's publick Worshipping, which was two thousand Cubits distant from those, who incamped nearest.

up

up as a Memorial of this great Miracle in that place. He commanded them likewise to take other twelve Stones, and to carry them on Shore, for another Memorial of the same Miracle.

The Priests that carried the Ark walking on dry Ground to the midst of *Jordan*, and stopping there, as *Joshua* had ordered them, he commanded the rest of the People to follow, forty thousand of the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, well armed, leading the Van. When they were all safely arriv'd on the other Side of the River, the General commanded the Priests that bare the Ark, which stood in the midst of the *Jordan* till all the People had passed over, to come out of the River with it; which they had no sooner done, but the Waters return'd to their natural Channel, and overflowed the Banks, as they usually did.

The *Israelites* having thus securely pass'd the *Jordan* on the tenth Day of the first Month, incamped in a Place called afterwards *Gilgal*, which was in the East-Border of *Jericho*. Here *Joshua* erected the twelve Stones, which the twelve Men had brought out of *Jordan*, as a Monument to Posterity, that when the Descendants of the *Israelites* in future Times should ask the Reason of it, they might know, that the Lord their God had dried up the Waters of the *Jordan*, and caused his People *Israel* to pass that River on dry Land, as he had formerly dried up the *Red Sea* for their Passage out of *Egypt*; and that all the People of the Earth might be sensible of the Omnipotency of the mighty God of *Israel*.

The Fame of this Miracle soon spread thro' the neighbouring Countries, and struck the Inhabitants with Astonishment and Terror; for when the Kings of the *Amorites*, which were on the West of the *Jordan*, and the Kings of the *Canaanites*, which inhabited by the Sea, heard that the Lord had miraculously convey'd his People over the River by dividing the Waters, their Hearts sunk for Fear, and their Courage fail'd them.

Joshua having thus conducted the *Israelites* over the River,

River, God commanded him to cause them all to be ² circumcised: Which being done, the Lord said to *Joshua*, "This Day I have taken away the ^a Shame of " *Egypt* from you." And from this Act of Circumcision, the Place where it was done was then called ^b *Gilgal*. Here the *Israelites* tarried till their Circumcision-wounds were healed; and here it was they kept the ^c *Passover*, on the fourteenth Day of the first Month, in the Evening. Now did the *Israelites* begin to enjoy the Good of the Land; the delicious Products of the promised Inheritance: For on the next Day after the *Passover* they eat of the Corn, and there being Plenty of all Fruits, on the Morrow the Manna was withdrawn.

All Things being ready for approaching the City of

² *Circumcised*. The great Goodness as well as Wisdom of God was very conspicuous in this Act of Circumcision after the *Israelites* were safe on the other Side of *Jordan*; for their miraculous Passage thro' that River, and the Fame of former Miracles wrought by God in their Favour had affected the neighbouring Nations with such Fear, that they dare not offer the least Opposition to *Israel* in their Passage. But now that they were safe on the other side of the River, God had a Work to do upon his People, which would render them for a while not only unable to assault their Enemies, but even to defend themselves. For during their Travel in the Wilderness, Circumcision had been omitted; not, I am apt to think, thro' a Neglect of that Ordinance; but being, or at least expecting to be, always upon the March, they thought it unsafe to expose them to the Hardship of it; and all they who were Men, when they came out of *Egypt*, and had been circumcised there, being dead, (*Joshua* and *Caleb* only excepted) most of the present Generation being such, as had been born within the Forty Years of their Travel in the Wilderness, had not been circumcised hitherto. Therefore now that they were passed over *Jordan*, and were ready to take Possession of the promised Land, and the Inhabitants of it under a general Consideration having shut themselves up in *Jericho*, the Lord commanded *Joshua* to prepare for the Circumcision of the People.

^a *Shame*. This Shame might be either

the reproachful Diffidence of the *Egyptians*, who would not believe that the Lord would make good his Promise in bringing his People into the promised Land; (which *Moses* often hinted, when he address'd himself to God in behalf of the People, to deprecate God's Anger from them, urging that their Enemies from thence would take Occasion to ridicule and question his Omnipotence;) or their Fore-skins not being cut off, which render'd them like the *Egyptians*.

^b *Gilgal*. Or *Galgol*, which signifies removing, rolling, or taking away. This Word is used before in *Josh. iv. 19.* and in *Deut. xi. 30.* but it was in either Place only by Way of Anticipation. This Place is by *St. Jerom* called *Galgol*, a famous City formerly about fifty Furlongs from *Jordan*, and ten from *Jericho* in the strait Road thither. The same *St. Jerom* with *Bed.* and *Lyr.* render the Word *Galgol*, a *Wheel*, *Revolution*, or *Circumvolution*. From whence they form the Word *Gulgolet*, *Chald. Gulgotha*, and thence, *Golgotha* or *Calvary*, which signifies a Skull, so called from its rolling, as being round. And *Calvary*, so call'd from the Skulls of the Criminals there executed.

^c *Passover*. This was the third *Passover* the *Israelites* celebrated. The First, the Day before they came out of *Egypt*, *Exod. xii.* The Second was the Year after, upon their receiving the Law, and setting up the Tabernacle in *Sinai*, *Numb. ix. 2.* The Third was this here in the Holy Land, in the Plains of *Jericho*, *Josh. v. 10.*

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river, God commanded him to smite them all, and to circumcise them. Which being done, the Lord said to Joshua, "This Day I have taken away the reproach of Egypt from the children of Israel."

JOSHUA CHAP. V.

An angel appears to Joshua.

45



JOSHUA 5. Verse 13.

And he looked, and behold, there stood a man over against him, with his sword drawn in his hand, etc.

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Jericho, *Joshua* gives the Word, and the Army marches towards it. The Place was strong, well provided, and full of Inhabitants, who had retir'd into it, and seem'd resolv'd to make a brave Defence. *Joshua* therefore undertakes to view the Place by himself, to find out the most advantageous Approaches to it. Whilst he was making his Observation, there appeared, as he thought, the awful Form of a Man, but with a Lustre in his Face, that bespoke him more than mortal. In his Hand he held a flaming Sword, and his whole Appearance far surpass'd any Thing of human Nature. The *Israelitish* General advances to this ^d great Unknown with a Courage becoming his Character, and boldly demands, who he is for? He answers, For *Israel*, of whose Army and People he was the Guardian. At these Words the General falls ^e prostrate, and waits the Command of his Lord, who bids him loose his Sandals, and not profane the Holy Place with irreverent Approaches. *Joshua* obeys, and receives new Orders for the better Management of the Siege of *Jericho*: He was to cause all the Forces to march round the Place six Days successively, and that the seventh Day the Priests should take the seven Trumpets made of Rams-horns, which were used to declare the ^f Jubilee Year; that they should go before the Ark, and

^d Great, &c. This was an Angel in the Shape of a Man, which the *Hebrew* calls *Gebir*, from whence some think this to be *Gabriel*. See Note one. His appearing in the Shape or Habit of a military Person is very proper in this Place, tho' God always adapts the Appearance of his Messengers to the Occasion. Thus in this Place of *Jsh. v. 13.* the drawn Sword in the Hand of a Man of War, representing his Power. Thus Christ appeared to *Mary Magdalen* in the Garden, in the Shape of a Gardiner. To the two Disciples walking to *Emmans* he appeared in the Habit of a Traveller, &c.

^e Prostrate. By this Act of Adoration, and Title of Lord, performed and given by *Joshua*, and accepted by the other, it is evident, that this Guardian or Captain of the Lord's Host was Christ, the Son of God, who was pleased in this manner to

appear to *Joshua*, both to encourage and direct him. Wherefore having first bid *Joshua*, (as *Moses* was bid at the Burning Bush, *Exod. iii. 5.*) to put off his Shoes, because the Place whereon he stood was holy, (which confirms that it was Christ, whose Presence consecrates every Place, where he appears) and *Joshua* having obeyed, *Ch. v. 13, 14, 15.* the Lord said, *Ch. vi. 2.* See I have given into thine Hand *Jericho*, and the King thereof, with the mighty Men of Valour; and instructed him in what manner he should beleaguer the City, and shew how he should take it, *Ch. vi. 2, &c.*

^f Jubilee. This Word is derived from the *Hebrew* Word *Jobel*, which signifies a Ram, and also a Ram's Horn, as here in *Jsh. vi. 4.* where the Word *Jobelim* is used and expounded by the *Chaldees* Paraphrast, *Rams-Horns.*

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round the City, and when the Trumpets sounded first loud, and then low, the People should all give a Shout, for then the Walls of the City should fall, and every Man should march in at the Place which was directly before him. Having rounded the City six Days as they were commanded, on the seventh by Break of Day they compassed it seven Times, and at the seventh Time, when the Priests blew with the Trumpets, the General said to the People, "Shout! For the Lord hath given you the City." With that the People give a Shout, and thereupon the Wall of the City fell down flat; so that the Army march'd directly up to it, and took it, putting all to the Sword, both Man and Beast, Old and Young: Only *Rahab*, and those in her House were saved alive; for *Joshua* had given a strict Charge before-hand to the two Spies (which she had formerly concealed) to take Care, when the Town should be taken, to go to her House, and bring out her Family in Discharge of their Oath to her. Which they accordingly did, and left her with all her Kindred and Substance safe & without the Camp of *Israel*. Then setting Fire to the City they destroyed every Thing in it, except the Silver and Gold, and Vessels of Brass and Iron; which were put into the Treasury of the House of the Lord, as it had been commanded. And lest any one should attempt to rebuild this City, *Joshua* publish'd this prophetick Imprecation on the bold Undertaker; "That he should lay the Foundation thereof in his First-born, and set up the Gates thereof in his youngest Son:" By which he meant, that it should be the ^h Ruin of his Family.

Before the City was taken *Joshua* had caution'd the People, not to spare any Thing that was in it, but to destroy all that lay in their Way, except Silver, Gold, Brass and Iron; which were to be consecrated to the Lord. And therefore he warn'd them not to meddle with any

^c Without, &c. Being Aliens, or Heathens, they were not permitted to come within the Camp, till they were proselyted, or at least legally purified.

^d Ruin. This was exactly fulfilled in *Hiel* the *Bethelite*; who in the Days of

Ahab King of *Israel* (above five hundred Years after) began to rebuild *Jericho* with the Loss of his eldest Son *Abiram*, and finish'd it with the Loss of *Segub* his youngest Son, 1 *Kings* xvi. 34.

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Thing, for fear of bringing a Curse, not only upon themselves, but upon all the Nation of the *Israelites*. Notwithstanding the strict Charge of *Joshua* against meddling with any Thing that was devoted to this general Destruction or consecrated to the Lord, yet so prevailing is the sacrilegious Thirst of Gold, that one of the Tribe of *Judah*, whose Name was *Achan*, contrary to the Command of the General, took something of the Spoil of either Sort, and hid them. This prov'd of ill Consequence to *Israel* in general, which was discovered upon this Occasion. *Joshua* being desirous to take in a little City named *Ai*, near *Bethavan*, to the East of *Bethel*, and knowing that it was neither populous nor well defended, detach'd a Body of three thousand Men only to go and attack it: Who no sooner approach the Town, but the Inhabitants sally out and repulse them, and drive them to their Camp; whither those that escaped went so frightened, that they brought a Terror upon the whole Army. This Defeat so afflicted *Joshua*, that rending his Cloaths, and prostrating himself before the Ark of the Lord, he lay there till the Evening, both he and the Elders, in token of extreamⁱ Sorrow and Humiliation sprinkling Dust on their reverent Heads. But *Joshua* being wholly ignorant of the Offence, and desirous to know the Cause, that had provoked God thus to desert his People, in this humble Expostulation complains to him. "Wherefore, O Lord God, hast thou brought this People over *Jordan* to deliver them into the Hands of the *Amorites* to destroy them? We had been happy, hadst thou permitted us to have dwelt on the other side of *Jordan*. What shall I say, when *Israel* turn their Backs upon their Enemies? For when the *Canaanites*, and all the Inhabitants of this Land shall hear this, they will encompass us, and cut us off, and what will become of thy Honour?"

The Lord not willing to let his Servant *Joshua* languish under the melancholy Thought of being deserted by

ⁱ Sorrow, See 1 Sam. iv. 11. Nehem. ix. 1.

him, tells him there is a latent Cause of his Displeasure among the People: That some of them had taken of the ^kaccursed thing, and also of those things which were devoted to the Lord, and pretending as if they had brought it all into the Treasury of God, had concealed it for their own Use. And to put him in a Way to clear the Camp of this accursed thing, which had brought this Judgment upon them, the Lord commanded *Joshua* to proclaim among the People; "There is an accursed thing " in the midst of thee, O *Israel*: Ye cannot stand before " your Enemies, until ye have removed the accursed " thing from among you." Then directing *Joshua*, how he should find out the Offender; and when he was found and convicted, how he should be punished, early next Morning summon'd all the Tribes before the Lord; and the Lot being cast upon the Tribes, the Tribe of *Judab* was the Tribe to whom the guilty Person belonged. Then proceeding by Lot from Tribe to Family, from Family to Household, and thence to particular Persons, the Lot fell at last upon *Achan*. Having thus happily discover'd the Person, *Joshua*, like a prudent Judge, with great Mildness examines the Criminal, and brought him to a Confession. "I have sinned against the Lord God " of *Israel*, said he, for when I saw among the Spoil a ¹Royal Garment, and two hundred Shekels of Silver, with

^k *Accursed*. That is, of that which was devoted to Destruction. Our old Translation renders it in *Joshua* vi. 17, 18. *execrable Thing*; and in *Ch. vii. 11, 12. excommunicate Thing*; which are synonymous Terms, and signify the same Thing. In which Places the Distinction of the Spoil is plainly express'd. All the Inhabitants of *Jericho*, except *Rahab* and her Family, with their Effects of all Sorts were to be destroyed; only Gold, Silver, Brass and Iron, were to be consecrated to the Lord. These are by the *Septuagint* call'd Holy, because they were to be laid up in the Treasury for the Service of the Tabernacle; but all the rest was profane, and order'd to be destroyed. The *Septuagint* keep to the Word *Anathema* in the foresaid Text, which signifies separated or accursed, and implies that the

profane Spoil was not to be mix'd with what was Holy. In the same Sense is the Word *Anathema* used in the New Testament, particularly by *St. Paul*, who pronounces Offenders *Anathema*, separated from God, that is, accursed: Which is the old Word for Excommunication, upon the Breach of several Canons in the most early Ages of the Church.

In this one Instance 'tis observable, That tho' it was but one Man that was actually guilty; yet the Guilt was charged upon the whole People, and they felt the Effects thereof; till they had convicted and punished the Offender. How great then is the Guilt of Nations in general, where Sins are Epidemical, and repeated from Age to Age?

¹ *Royal*. This is render'd *Babylonish*, suppos'd to be such a rich Garment as the

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“ with a ^m Wedge of Gold, of fifty Shekels Weight, “ my Covetousness prompted me to take them; which “ I did, and hid them in the Earth in the midst of my “ Tent.” *Joshua*, for his more evident Conviction, sent Messengers to *Achan's* Tent; who, finding the things hid, as he had confessed, brought them to the Assembly, and laid them before the Lord. And now *Achan* being duly convicted, by his own Confession and the Notoriousness of the Fact, *Joshua* proceeded to Execution by the ⁿ express Command of God; which was thus: They take *Achan*, with the Garments, the Money, and Wedge of Gold, as Evidences of his Guilt, and with him his ^o Sons, his Daughters, his Cattle, his Tent and all his Moveables, and brought them into the Valley of *Achor*; (which from him took its Name, signifying Trouble) where he and his Family being first stoned, were afterwards burn'd. And to perpetuate the Memory of this for a Warning to others, they raised a great Heap of Stones over them.

The Wrath of God being appeased by this Execution, he encourages *Joshua* to attack *Ai* afresh, assuring him that he had given the King of *Ai* and all his People and Country into his Hand; and that he should do to them as he had done to *Jericho* and her King; only, for the Incouragement of the Soldiers, he allowed them the Plunder of the City, and the Cattle for themselves; giving *Joshua* particular ^p Instructions to lay a Party of Men in ^q Ambuscade behind the City.

the Kings of *Babylon* formerly wore. The Hebrews call it *Sinhar*, that is *Babylonish*; for *Babylon* was in the Land of *Shinar*, *Gen. xi. 2.* Thence the Latins render it *Pallium Coccineum*, a Scarlet Cloak. The Greeks render it *Stoleen Poikileen*, a Garment of State of divers Colours. But this Variety of Versions do all agree in this, that it was a rich Garment.

^m Wedge. This was made in the Form of a Tongue, and for that Reason is not improperly sometimes called a Tongue of Gold.

ⁿ Express. See *Josh. vii. 15.*

^o Sons, &c. This Judgment only ap-

pertains to God, and to whom he will reveal it. To Man he hath expressly commanded, not to punish the Fathers for the Children, nor the Children for the Fathers sake, but that every one should be put to Death for his own Sin. *Deut. xxiv. 16.*

^p Instructions. God would not destroy *Ai* by a Miracle, as he had done *Jericho*, because he had a Mind to make his People formidable for their Power and Policy to other Nations with whom they were afterwards to engage.

^q Ambuscade. This was the first Ambuscade we read of in History.

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In order to this Action *Joshua* selected thirty thousand Men, out of which he appointed five thousand to hide themselves between *Bethel* and *Ai*, who, upon the Signal that he should give them, which was by holding up a Spear with a Banner upon it, should enter the City, and set it on fire; himself having first by another Stratagem drawn all the Forces out of the Town to pursue him in his pretended Flight.

The Ambuscade being laid as he had directed, he drew up the Army before the North Part of the City of *Ai*, and towards Night he marched into the Valley in Sight of the Enemy to tempt them to sally out upon him. This succeeded as *Joshua* desired; for the King of *Ai* thinking he had them sure now, early the next Morning drew out all his Forces to give *Israel* Battle; who at the first Charge gave Way, and fled. This so animated the King of *Ai*'s Army, that concluding the *Israelites* fled indeed through Fear of them, they called out all the Citizens to assist in the Pursuit, which they eagerly did, leaving the Town naked and defenceless. But this Confidence of Victory cost them dear; for when *Joshua* by his sham Flight had drawn them a good Distance from the City, he gave the Signal to the Ambuscade, who immediately enter'd the City, and set it on Fire. When *Joshua* by the Smoak perceived his Men had possessed themselves of the Town, he faced about, and charged the *Aian* Army; who, not in the least expecting the *Israelites* would rally, began to think of retiring to the City; but when they saw their City in Flames, they were so dispirited that they had no Power to fight or fly. In the mean time the Ambuscade having perform'd their Orders in burning the City, fell upon the Rear of the King of *Ai*'s dismayed Forces, who being thus encompassed were cut in Pieces.

Joshua having thus gain'd an intire Victory march'd to *Ai*, and put all he found in it to the Sword: So that the Number of the Slain that Day amounted to twelve thousand Men and Women. The Cattle and Spoil of the City was given to the Soldiers, who burnt the City, and

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and made it a Heap of Rubbish. As for the King of *Ai*, he was taken Prisoner in the Fight; and being brought before the General, he was by his Command hanged on a Tree till [†] Sun-set; at which time he was taken down, and buried under a great heap of Stones at the Entrance of the Gate of the City.

Joshua having thus happily succeeded in this Action against *Ai*, in Token of Gratitude to the great Giver of Victory erected an Altar to him in Mount *Ebal*, as the Lord had by [†] *Moses* before commanded, on which he offered Burnt-Offerings, and sacrificed Peace-Offerings: And then he not only read unto the People, both *Israelites* and Strangers, the Words of the Law given by *Moses*, but wrote also upon great Stones a [‡] Copy of the Law which *Moses* had written.

The Fame of the *Israelites* Success against *Jericho* and *Ai*, and the terrible Slaughter of the Inhabitants, alarm'd all the Kings on that side the *Jordan*; who consulting the common Security confederated together, entering into a League for their mutual Defence. But the *Gibeonites*, who were more deeply affected with the Rumour of the *Israelites* Courage and Power, distrusting a confederated Force against so great and numerous a People, and so well skill'd in the Art of War, had recourse to a Stratagem to save themselves from the general Destruction, which they plainly perceiv'd hung over their Heads. They chose a certain number of their Men, who were instructed to feign themselves to be Ambassadors, come from a far Country to treat for Peace, and enter into a League with *Israel*. And to persuade them into a Belief of the great distance they lived from thence, they dressed themselves in old Cloaths, with old clouted Shoes on their Feet, and put dry mouldy Bread into old Sacks,

[†] *Sun-set*. This was in Pursuance of the Law. See *Deut.* xxi. 22, 23.

[‡] *Moses*. See *Exod.* xx. 25. and *Deut.* xxvii. 5.

[§] *Copy*. It is no great Difficulty to apprehend how many of the Gentile Nations came to imitate the *Jews* in many of their religious Observances and Rites, since the *Mosaic* Law was so publicly exposed to the Sight of all.

and Wine into * old Bottles. Thus accoutred they came to the *Israelitish* Camp at *Gilgal*, and presenting themselves before the General, told him they were come from a far Country, and desired to enter into a League with *Israel*. The People at first suspected these Ambassadors, and told them, that perhaps they possessed part of that Land which God had given them; and if so, they could not make a Peace with them. And *Joshua* put the Question directly to them, asking them who they were, and from whence they came? To which they cunningly, but falsely replied, "From a far Country are we come, where we have heard of the Fame of the Lord thy God; of all that he did for thee in *Egypt*, and to *Sihon* and *Og* the *Amorite* Kings. Wherefore our Governors bid us take Provision for our Journey, and tell you we are your Servants, and desire to be in Amity with you." Then producing their mouldy Bread, their torn Bottles, and their old Cloaths and Shoes, they assured them that they took the Bread hot out of their Houses when they came from home; that their Bottles were then new; and that their Garments and Shoes were worn old by reason of the Length of their Journey. The *Israelites* in this suffered themselves to be outwitted; for they had a sure Way to have known the whole Truth of this Matter: But neglecting to ask Counsel at the Mouth of the Lord, they suffered themselves to be imposed upon by the seeming Simplicity of the subtil *Gibeonites*. This Stratagem of theirs had its desired Effect: The credulous *Israelites* believe the plausible Story of the *Gibeonites*, confirm'd sufficiently, as they thought, by demonstrable Tokens, and of which their own Eyes were Judges: So that without any further Hesitation or Scruple, they received them into their Alliance, *Joshua* making Peace with them to let them live, and the Princes of the Congregation swearing solemnly to observe it. But within

* *Old Bottles*. These Bottles were not of Glass or Earth, as those in Use now a-days; but were made of Leather, in

which they formerly, and now in some Countries, kept their Wine. See the Note on the Letter S, in *Lid. VI. Alphabet first*.

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three Days this Cheat was discovered; and they who pretended to come from a distant Country, proved to be their Neighbours, and inhabited a part of that Land which God had given *Israel* to possess.

When the *Israelites* found their new Allies had put a Trick upon them, and what noble Plunder the rich Cities of the *Gibeonites* would have afforded them, they could not forbear mutinying against the Princes who had sworn to observe the League; which they perceiving, endeavoured to pacify them by urging the Necessity they were under of keeping their Oath, lest they should incur God's Displeasure; and that tho' the Alliance extended to the saving their Lives, yet it did not exempt them from Tribute or Service, from which they might reap considerable Advantages, intending to make them Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water, for the Use of all the Congregation. This being approved, appeased the People; and *Joshua* calling for the *Gibeonites*, expostulates the Matter with them for thus imposing upon and deceiving them. They in Excuse answer, That they were sensible God had given them all the Land where they dwelt, and commanded them to kill all the Inhabitants; and that they had made use of this Stratagem to save their Lives.

They did save their Lives indeed by this Trick, but were condemned to perpetual Bondage, and *Joshua* himself pronounced this Sentence against them; "Now therefore are ye cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being Bondmen, even Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water, for the "House of my God." The *Gibeonites* glad to come off so, reply'd, "Behold we are in thy Hand, do to us what thou wilt." Thus *Joshua* delivered the *Gibeonites* from the Fury of the *Israelites*, who would have put them all to the Sword. But tho' they had by this Policy saved their

^a *House*. From the *Gibeonites* being thus given or dedicated to the Service of the Tabernacle, and of all the Congregation, their Posterity, after the build-

ing of the Temple, were called *Nathinims* (that is, *Given*) in *1 Chron. ix. 2.* and often so in other Places.

Lives with the Loss of their Liberty; yet their Neighbours the *Amorites* put them in fresh Danger of losing them: For deserting the common Interest, and making a separate League with *Israel* for themselves, they resolv'd to take Revenge of them. Accordingly *Adonizedek* King of *Jebus* taking with him four neighbouring Kings, *Hobam* King of *Hebron*, *Piram* King of *Jarmuth*, *Japia* King of *Lachish*, and *Debir* King of *Eglon*, with their joined Forces they incamp before *Gibeon*. The *Gibeonites* not daring to trust to the Strength of their City against so potent and confederated a Force, dispatch away Messengers to their new and great Allies to their Camp at *Gilgal*, to acquaint them that the Kings of the *Amorites* that dwelt in the Mountains had arm'd against them, and to intreat them to come up to their Relief with speed. *Joshua* was bound in Honour and Interest to succour them; to which God himself gave particular Encouragement, assuring him of Victory. Upon which *Joshua* by a swift March came up with them by Night, and surprized them in the Morning. The Action was hot for a time, but they were soon put to Flight; and as they fled, a Storm of Hail overtook them, which fell with such Violence upon them, that more were destroyed by the Hailstones than by the Sword. The five Confederate Kings escaping the Storm of Hail, in their Flight made to a Cave in a place called *Mak-kedah*, and there hid themselves from the Pursuit of the Enemy: But *Joshua* having Intelligence of their Concealment, order'd the Cave to be block'd up, and set a Guard upon it to prevent their Escape; commanding the rest of the Army to continue the Pursuit, and to do Execution on the Enemies, lest they should retreat to any fortified place. And that they might not want time to compleat their Victory, *Joshua*, addressing himself to God in Prayer, received Authority from him to command the Sun, in the Sight of *Israel*, to stand still, saying, "Sun, stand thou still upon *Gibeon*, and thou

Johns. This Place was afterwards, in *David's* Time, called *Jerusalem*.

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"Moon in the Valley of *Ajalon*." The great Machines obeyed, and stood unmoved at his Command. This was a long Day indeed; for never before or since did God honour Man so much as to change the Course of Nature, and stop the Motion of the rolling Orbs.

Heaven thus miraculously assisting *Joshua* in gaining the Victory, he returns from the Chase, and ordering the Cave to be open'd, where the five Kings lay hid, he commanded them to be brought before him. Then calling for the Officers of the Army, he bid them set their Feet upon the Necks of those Kings; which they did. This was not to insult over the wretched Captives, but an emblematical Prediction of their future Success over the Enemies of God's People; For thus, says *Joshua*, I will do to all that oppose you. Then commanding Execution to be done upon them, he caused them to be hanged upon several Trees until the Evening; when he order'd them to be taken down, and cast into the Cave where they had hid themselves, making their intended Sanctuary their Sepulchre.

Joshua having thus successfully cleared the Field of his Enemies, the next Thing he undertakes is the reducing of the Cities. He marched first to *Makkedah*, then to *Libnah*; from thence to *Lachish*, where he slew the King of *Gezar*, who came to the Relief of *Lachish*. From *Lachish* he marched to *Eglon*, from *Eglon* to *Hebron*, and from *Hebron* to *Debir*. All which Places he took by Storm, and put the Inhabitants, both Kings and People, to the Sword, as God had * commanded. *Joshua* having performed such great Exploits, and conquered so many Kings and Nations in y one Expedition thro' the Assistance of the mighty God of *Israel*, returned with his victorious Army to his Camp at *Gilgal*.

These great Successes of *Israel* alarmed the more di-

* Commanded. See *Dent.* xx. v. 16, 17.
y One Expedition. All these great Achievements are by some Chronologers reckon'd to have been performed in the first Year of *Joshua's* Government, and

placed in the Year of the World 2553. But they rather seem to have extended into, if they did not wholly take up the Year 2554.

stant Nations, especially the *Hazorites*, whose King thinking it in vain for the Princes of *Canaan* to encounter singly with so puissant and victorious an Army, sends to *Jobab* King of *Madon*, to the King of *Shimron*, and to the King of *Achshaph*, and to all the neighbouring Princes within Reach, to invite them into a League, that with their united Force they might drive the *Israelites* out of the Land they had conquered.

These Potentates the next Campaign with an almost innumerable Army prepare to fight *Joshua*; whose God, to chastise the Pride and Presumption of his Enemies, and to encourage his General, bids him not to fear them, "For to-morrow, says he, I will deliver them into the Hand of *Israel*, and thou shalt disable their Horses, and burn their Chariots."

The Confederate Princes thinking themselves secure in their Numbers, little thought *Joshua* durst look them in the Face: But he, in pursuance of the Encouragement and Instructions God had given him, without Delay takes the Field, marches directly towards the Enemy, and falls so suddenly upon them, that he immediately routed them, and in the Pursuit put all to the Sword. And because *Jabin*, the King of *Hazor* had been the Head of the Confederacy, he caused that City to be burnt to the Ground. But all the other Cities, whose Inhabitants were slain in the Action, he left standing, and gave the Cattle and Plunder of them to the Soldiers. Thus did *Joshua* by 2 Degrees recover all the Land of *Canaan*, subduing the People that possessed it, and slaying all their Kings, one and thirty in Number, with the *Anakims* or Giants, of whom he left none remaining, except in *Gaza*, *Gath*, and *Ashdod*. * And now *Joshua* began

* *Degrees*. These great Achievements may be allowed to have taken up some Years. And indeed in *Josh. xi. 18.* it is said, *Joshua made War a long Time with all those Kings.* And from *Caleb's* Words in *Chap. xiv. v. 6, & 10.* where he says, It is five and forty Years since he was sent as a Spy into the Land, it may rea-

sonably be gathered, that between six and seven Years were spent in this War.

* *And, &c.* The other Things which are mentioned in the Book of *Joshua*, may be supposed to have taken up the rest of *Joshua's* Time: As the Dividing the Land among the nine Tribes and half by Lot, from *Chap. xiv. to Chap. xix.* (For

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JOSHUA 11. Verse 9. 27
*And Joshua did unto them as the
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horses, & burnt their chariots with fire.* 276.

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gan to think of a Settlement, which he did by dividing the Land beyond *Jordan* among the nine Tribes and half; who being settled in their several Possessions, *Joshua* set up the Tabernacle at *Shiloh*. Then calling the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, and half Tribe of *Manasseh*, and acknowledging that they had faithfully kept their Covenant in accompanying their Brethren, and helping them to subdue their Enemies, he kindly dismissed them, advising them to continue stedfast in their Duty to God; and giving them his Blessing, they returned to their Families loaded with Spoils, consisting of Gold, Brass, Iron, Raiment, and very much Cattle, which was their Share of the Plunder taken from the Enemy during the War.

These two Tribes and half, being safely arrived on the Borders of the *Jordan*, erected an Altar, not for any religious Use, but as a Memorial to succeeding Ages, that though they were parted from their Brethren by the *Jordan*, yet they were all of one Extraction and Religion, and had equal Right to the Altar of the Lord at *Shiloh*, and the Worship performed there. This had like to have proved of fatal Consequence, and occasion'd a War between them and the other Tribes; to whom the Matter being either misrepresented, or they misapprehending it, and suspecting their Brethren on the other Side the *Jordan* were about to revolt from God and them, they unanimously assemble their Forces at *Shiloh*, in order to declare War against them. But before they proceeded to Extremities, they chose ten Princes, one out of each Tribe, and they the Chiefs of their Families, with *Phineas* and *Eleazar*, and sent them away to inquire into the Cause of this new erected Altar.

As soon as they were come to them, they fell very roughly upon them, charging them with Rebellion a-

(For the Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, had their Portions assigned, and given them on the other Side of the *Jordan* by *Moses* himself *Numb.* xxxii. which is in *Jesh.* xiii. 20, 21. repeated, and the Lots described.) The setting up of the Tabernacle at *Shiloh*, *Chap.* xviii. 1. the appointing Ci-

ties of Refuge for the Manslayer, *Ch.* xx. the setting out Cities for the *Levites*, some out of each Tribe, *Ch.* xxi. with many other Things of more particular Concern, which being not historical, I have thought fit to omit in the Text, and from hence refer the Reader to the Texts above-mentioned, and what follows.

gainst the Lord; and, to aggravate the Matter, they put them in Mind of the Sin of *Peor*; and to let them see that it was not out of an officious busy Temper or Humour, that they came to them thus, but out of a general Concern for the whole People, they said, "If you thus rebel against the Lord, he will soon be angry with the whole Congregation of *Israel*." This they inforce by the late Instance of *Achan*. And to prevent any Objection, and take from them all Pretence of Excuse or Defence, they add, "If ye have done this from any Apprehension, that the Land ye possess on that Side the *Jordan* is unclean, or less holy than ours, because the Tabernacle is on our Side the River, return and settle amongst us, where the Tabernacle resteth; But by no Means rebel against the Lord, nor us, in building you an Altar besides the Altar of the Lord." The *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, and *Manassites*, were very much concerned at the ill Opinion their Brethren entertain'd of them: But well knowing their own Innocency, with a solemn Appeal to God return Answer to *Phineas* and his Companions in this Manner: "The Lord God of the whole World, and all *Israel*, shall know how innocent we are of the Rebellion with which you charge us. If we have set up an Altar in Opposition to the Lord's Altar, let him judge and punish us, neither do ye shew us any Favour. But when you shall know the Truth, you will find what we have done was to prevent what you fear. For we consider'd that in Time to come your Children might say unto our Children, What have ye to do with the Lord God of *Israel*? For since the Lord hath made the *Jordan* a Border and Bound between us and you, you have no Part in the Lord; that is, you do not belong to the Congregation of the Lord, nor have any Right to come before his Tabernacle, nor to offer upon his Altar; and so your Children might be an Occasion to our Children to turn Rebels to the Lord,

^a *Peor*. See *Numb.* xxv, for which Sin of *Peor*, the Plague was sent among the Congregation.

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“ Therefore we agreed to build an Altar, not for Burnt-
“ Offering, nor for Sacrifice, but to be a Witness be-
“ tween you and us, and our Generations after us;
“ that when we should come to perform Service to
“ the Lord with our Burnt-Offering and Sacrifice be-
“ fore him, if your Children should say unto ours, Ye
“ have no Part in the Lord; our Children might reply,
“ Behold the Pattern of the Altar of the Lord, which
“ our Fathers made, not to sacrifice upon, but to be a
“ Witness between us and you. But as to the Matter
“ you charge us with, God forbid that we should rebel
“ against the Lord, and turn this Day from following
“ the Lord, to build an Altar for Burnt-Offerings,
“ Meat-Offerings or Sacrifices, besides the Altar of
“ our God, that is before his Tabernacle.

When *Phineas* and the Princes of the People that were with him heard this fair and just Vindication of the *Reubenites* and the rest, they could not forbear shewing great Satisfaction; and being overjoy'd at the Proof of their Innocence, *Phineas* looking upon this as a happy token of God's Presence among them, testifies the same to the injur'd *Reubenites*, assuring them by this Test of their Loyalty to God, that he was still present with them. Then taking Leave of their Brethren, they return in Triumph to the *Israelites* at *Shiloh*, who with infinite Pleasure and Joy receive the good Tidings of their Brethrens Innocence, and of their pious Care and Zeal to preserve their Posterity in the Fear and Service of the true God: And changing their angry Thoughts of War into those of Tenderness and Peace, they bless God for the happy Issue of this dangerous Affair. As for the *Reubenites* and their Brethren, to prevent any future Jealousy or Suspicion of their Intentions, they called the Altar which they had built *ED*, which signifies a Witness, adding this as the Reason of the Name; “ For it
“ shall be a Witness between us and our Brethren, the
“ other Tribes of *Israel*, that the Lord is God.” Intimating by this, that tho' they lived at a Distance from
the

the rest of their Brethren, yet both had but one God, who was the God of *Israel*.

After this *Joshua* reaped the Fruits of his Victories in the quiet Enjoyment of Peace; and at last being grown old, and foreseeing his End to be near at Hand, he caused all *Israel* to be assembled, to whom he thus briefly enumerated the Blessings God had bestowed on their Ancestors and themselves: "Your Fathers dwelt on the other Side of the *Jordan*, from whence the Lord brought *Abraham* his Servant to this happy Country, where he blessed his old Age with a Son, and that Son with two others, *Jacob* and *Esau*. *Esau* possessed Mount *Seir*; but *Jacob* and his Family went into *Egypt*; where their Posterity remain'd under slavish Bondage till God sent *Moses* and *Aaron* to deliver them. You cannot be ignorant of the Wonders God wrought by their Hands when he plagued *Egypt* for their Sakes, nor of his Care in protecting them against the *Amorites*. Your selyes have lately seen confederated Nations fall before you, and the Power of the Almighty hath always pathed out the way to an easy Victory for you over all your Enemies. And now at last he hath left you in quiet Possession of a Land that aboundeth with all manner of Plenty; whose happy Soil, without your Labour, yields the comfortable Product of all that Nature can give. In Recompence for all this, your great Protector and Benefactor requires only an exact Obedience to his Laws." Then solemnly declaring, "That what Course soever the rest should take, he and his House would serve the Lord;" and exhorting them to a faithful Observance of the Laws of God, he invited them to renew the Covenant with God. Which having done, in very ample and significant Terms he wrote the Words of their Covenant in the Book of the Law of God. Then setting up a great Stone under an Oak by the Sanctuary of the Lord, he bid the People take notice, That that very Stone should be a Witness

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Witness to them, to put them in mind of the Covenant which they had made, to prevent them hereafter from denying their God.

Soon after this, *Joshua* being arrived at the hundred and tenth Year of his Age died, and was buried in the Border of his Inheritance, in *Tinmath-Sera*, in Mount *Ephraim*; which City, upon the Division of the Land amongst the Tribes, the Children of *Israel* by God's Direction gave unto him, in token of Gratitude for the many Services and Benefits they had received by his Administration. Much about the same time also died *Eleazer*, the Son of *Aaron* the Priest, whom they buried in a Hill which was given him in Mount *Ephraim*, and which descended to *Phineas* his Son and Successor in the Priesthood.

The Children of *Israel*, as has been said at the End of the first Book, being obliged by Oath to carry *Joseph's* Bones with them when they should be delivered from the *Egyptian* Bondage, having them still with them, now bethought themselves of the Obligation they lay under to perform their Ancestors Engagement; they therefore buried *Joseph's* Bones in *Sechem*, in a parcel of Ground which *Jacob* had formerly bought of the Son of *Hamor*, the Father of *Sechem*; which parcel of Ground afterwards became the Inheritance of *Joseph's* Posterity.

† God's Direction. See *Joshua* xix. v. 49, 50.



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† **BOOK IV.**

THE ^d*Israelites* as yet having *Joshua's* Exhortation fresh in their Memory, and being warn'd of the dangerous Consequence of their Ancestors Murmurings, dare not undertake any Thing without God's Direction. And there still remaining several of the *Canaanitish* Kings unconquer'd, and who might be troublesome to them, they unanimously

^d *The Israelites.* After the Death of *Joshua*, the *Israelites* were long without any King or Sovereign. Every Tribe, being govern'd by its Elders, chose its own Commanders for War, and they by Degrees subdued the rest of the Inhabitants of the Country, either destroying or making them Tributaries. The Neighbouring Kings made War on, and sometimes subdued them; but God from Time to Time raised some Persons, who delivered them from their Oppressions. In Acknowledgment for which Benefit the People appointed them their Judges, that is, their supreme *Magistrates*, to administer Justice, and govern them.

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repair to the sacred Oracle at *Shilob*, to ask Direction who should go first up for them to fight the *Canaanites*. The Lord gave this first Post of Honour to the Tribe of *Judab*, with an Assurance of Victory. Whereupon they invited the Tribe of *Simeon*, whose Lot lay within theirs, to accompany them in this Expedition; they promised them, if they would join Forces with them now, they would do the like for them afterwards. *Simeon* agrees; and taking the Field they both attack the cruel King of *Bezek*, who having fortified himself in his City, could not hold out long against victorious *Israel*; but seeing his heartless Troops give Way, quits the Place, and endeavours by ignoble Flight to save his Life. But in vain; for the *Israelites* having taken the Town, and put ten thousand of the People to the Sword, they pursue *Adonibezek* the King, and having taken him, they cut off his Thumbs and great Toes. This Execution drew from the Tyrant an Acknowledgment of the Justice of God upon him; for he confessed he had cut off the Thumbs and great Toes of no less than seventy Kings, whom in this mangled Condition he made to gather their Meat like Dogs under his Table.

The old City * *Jebus*, with its Territories, lay in two Parts: Of which one Part fell to the Lot of *Judab*, the other Part to that of *Benjamin*. *Judab* soon overrun that Part of it that belonged to him, and having put the Inhabitants to the Sword, set the Place on Fire. Hither it was they brought the Captive King *Adonibezek*, where he died.

The next March of the *Israelites* was against the *Canaanites* that dwelt to the South ward on the Mountains, and in the Plains; where having taken *Hebron*, they marched to attack *Debir*, which was a Part of *Caleb's* Portion, but possessed by the *Canaanites*. This being *Caleb's* Propriety, notwithstanding his great Age, he re-

* *Jebus*. This City, and its Territories i. 8. called *Jerusalem*, which Name it had had hitherto been possessed by the *Jebusites*, who sprung from *Jebus*, the third Son of *Canaan*; *Gen. x. 16*. It is in *Judg.* had sacked and burnt it, it was rebuilt again, and possessed by the *Jebusites*.

selves to storm the Place; and to encourage his Men the more in this brave Attempt, he made Proclamation in his Camp that he would give *Achsab* his Daughter to the brave Hero who should attack and take the Town. The Hopes of this beautiful Prize raised in all the Youth a generous Emulation, and spurred them on to Love and Glory: But none came near the brave ^e *Othniel*, whose conquering Sword at the Head of his Party hews down all before him, and paths the Way to Victory. In short, he won the Place, and with it the fair Prize.

Othniel's Gallantry being thus nobly rewarded by *Caleb*, the beauteous *Achsab* thinking herself not a sufficient Gratitude for the Service of her valiant Hero, puts him upon asking of her Father a Parcel of Land which lay commodiously by their Estate. *Othniel* thinking his Service already over-paid, seems backward in the Request; therefore *Achsab* addressing herself to her Father *Caleb*, desired him in general Terms to give her a Blessing, but more particularly she thus applied to him; "Thou hast already given me a pleasant Estate in the South Part of the Country; but it is hot and dry, and likely to prove barren; give me, I pray thee, this Parcel of Land, which is well watered." Upon which the generous Parent granted her Request, giving her the upper and lower 8 Springs.

Old *Caleb*, though he had passed his ^h eighty-fifth Year, yet retaining his youthful Strength and Vigour, pushes on his good Fortune, and takes *Hebron*, as has been already said, with other Places, expelling the Gigantick Race of *Anak*; but the Inhabitants of the Valley kept their Ground, being a hardy People, and well provided with warlike Munition, such as Iron Chariots, &c.

Those of *Joseph*'s Family, that went up against *Bethel*, did by the Assistance of the Lord prevail; for

^e *Othniel*. He was somewhat of Kin to *Caleb*, being, as *Tremellius* and *Junius* say, of the Posterity of *Kenaz*; from whom *Caleb* being descended, was there-

fore called the *Kenazite*, *Numb.* xxxii. 17. and *Josh.* xiv. v. 14.

⁸ Springs. See *Judg.* i. 15.

^h Eighty. See *Josh.* xiv. 11, 12.

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sending out Spies to discover the City, they seeing a Man come out of it seized him, and promised him Mercy if he would shew them the Avenues to it. The Man, to save his Life, gave them the best Information he could; by which they so well succeeded, that having given Notice to the rest of their Forces to join them, they enter'd the Town, and put the Inhabitants to the Sword, except the Man that had discovered the Entrance, with his Family.

As for the other Tribes, they also possessed themselves of the Lands allotted them; but did not destroy the Inhabitants, contenting themselves with making them tributary, and suffering them to dwell promiscuously amongst them. Only the Children of *Dan* were so unsuccessful against the *Amorites*, that they were forced to quit the Plains, and retire to the mountainous Parts of the Country, where they were kept pent up for a Time. But the rest of the *Israelites*, who had been successful against the *Canaanites* and *Amorites*, fell into a great Error; for, either thro' Lenity or Covetousness, not making the right Use of their Victories, as they were expresslyⁱ commanded by God, they not only permitted them to live, but encouraged them to trade and deal with them. This Disobedience and Neglect of the Divine Precept not only proved a Snare to them, but likewise incensed God against them; who, to make them sensible of their Folly, sent an^k Angel to remind them of the many Favours he had bestowed upon them, in delivering them out of *Egypt*, and bringing them into that good Land, and of his Faithfulness in keeping his Covenant with them, which they had so unfaithfully violated, by which Ingratitude they had provoked God to withdraw his Help and Protection from them.

ⁱ Commanded. See *Exod. xxiii. v. 32.*
^{33.} *Deut. vii. 2. &c.*

^k Angel. That is, a Messenger, for so the Word implies. The Rabbins will have this Messenger to be *Phineas* the

Priest. But by the Words of the Text, *Judg. i. 1.* it must be an Angel, or divine Messenger, by whose Mouth God declared, *I brought you out of Egypt*; which could not be applied to *Phineas*.

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This Reproach for the present brought the People to themselves, and made them so sensible of their Sin that they fell into a general weeping, deplored the Wretchedness of their Condition, and offered Sacrifice to the Lord to appease his Wrath, calling the Name of the Place where they received this Reproof *Bochim*, which signifies Weepers. * But scarce were their Tears wiped off at *Bochim*, when they, forsaking the Lord God of their Fathers, fell into open Idolatry, worshipping ¹ *Baal* and *Ashteroth*, the Idols of the Heathens; which so provoked the Lord, that he ^m often suffered them to be taken and enslaved by their Enemies. But that which brought these Calamities upon them, was their Favour to those Enemies with whom God had forbid them all Manner of ⁿ Correspondence. For, besides that it was expressly forbidden in the Law, *Joshua* but just before his Death had particularly warned them of the Danger they would fall into, if they should entertain any Familiarity with those Nations that God had doomed to Destruction: And above all things, he laid a most strict Charge on

* Mention was made in *Josh. xxiv. 21.* (and the same is repeated here, *Judg. ii. v. 7.*) that the People of *Israel* served the Lord all the Days of *Joshua*, and all the Days of the Elders that out-lived *Joshua*, who had seen all the great Works of the Lord that he wrought for *Israel*. But when that Generation was dead, and there arose another Generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the Works which he had done for *Israel. v. 10.* The Children of *Israel* did Evil in the Sight of the Lord, and served *Baalim, v. 11.* that is, the less, or Tutelar Gods, so called of the several Nations about them.

¹ *Baal* and *Ashteroth*. That is, Idols or Gods of the Heathens: For by *Baal*, or *Baalim*, were signified all the Male Gods, as the Females were by *Ashteroth*, which was the Idol of the *Zidonians*, represented in the Form of a Sheep. The first Idol, or *Baal* was that of *Nimrod*, which the *Assyrians* worshipped: For *Nimrod* was *Baal* or *Belus*, the Father of *Ninus*, Husband to *Semiramis*, And

Baal, Bal, Beel, Bel, Belus, &c. are the same. From the *Assyrians* the *Babylonians* took the Idol and Worship of *Beli*; as it is plain in the History of *Bel* and the Dragon; (which, according to the *Latins*, is the fourteenth Chapter of *Daniel*.) And from the *Babylonians* the *Zidonians* and *Phonicians* took them. Hence all the Idols or Gods of the Heathens, by an extensive Name, were called *Baal, Bel, Baalim*. And from the Variety of Gods, or their Places and Events, they were named, as *Beelphogor*, that is, *Priapus*, the lustful God; *Beelzebub*, the God of Flies; *Beelzebub*, the God of the Eagles, or *Mercury*; *Baalgah*, the God Fortune. And from the Word *Baal* are compounded several African Names, (which Language, as well as Country, bordered on the Hebrews,) as *Hannibal*, that is, Lord of Camps; *Hadrabal*, Lord of Villages, &c.

^m Often. See *Judg. ii.* from the fourteenth Verse to the End of the Chapter.

ⁿ Correspondence. See the Note at the last Letter.

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them to take Care that they did not marry with them, which he knew would naturally lead them to Idolatry. Yet, notwithstanding they knew all this, they so far indulged themselves in a loose Conversation with the *Canaanites*, *Hittites*, *Perizzites*, *Amorites*, *Hivites*, and *Jebusites*, that forgetting the Obligation they lay under, they made Intermarriages with them; the immediate Consequence of which was, that they served their ^{own} Gods.

By these Provocations God was so incensed against *Israel*, that he left them to themselves; who without his Care and Protection made but a poor Defence against their Enemies: For *Cushan-rishathaim*, King of *Mesopotamia*, invading them, made an easy Conquest of them, and enslaved them for eight Years. During which time of Servitude the *Israelites* coming to a Sense and Acknowledgment of their Transgressions, and crying to the Lord for Help, he raised up a Deliverer for them. This was the brave *Othniel*, who in Recompence of his Valour had married *Caleb's* Daughter. This Hero being divinely ^p inspired, undertook the Deliverance of the *Israelites*, defeated *Cushan-rishathaim*, King of *Mesopotamia*, and by this Victory over the *Syrians* procured to the *Israelites* a Peace of ^q forty Years; during which time *Othniel* govern'd *Israel*, and was the first of those we call Judges.

The *Israelites* having under *Othniel's* peaceful Administration enjoyed an uninterrupted Rest and Tranquillity, grew wanton; and ungratefully forgetting the former Favours and Benefits God had bestowed upon them, lapsed into their former Sins of Apostacy

* Gods. See *Judg.* iii. 6.

^p Inspir'd. All virtuous Qualities, whether natural or supernatural, are in the Holy Scripture called the *Spirit of the Lord*. Thus *Berakeel*, *Exod.* xxxi. 3. is said to be filled with the Spirit of God, when he was appointed to build the Tabernacle. The same is said of *Gideon*, *Samson*, *Saul*, and others,

^q Forty Years. That is, from the Death of *Jeshua*, as some compute it; but it must be in all Probability from the Time of their Deliverance by the Conduct of *Othniel*, who *Dn Pin* says, (and with great Reason,) govern'd *Israel* in Peace for the Space of forty Years.

and Corruption in Religion. Of which the two following * Stories are notorious Instances.

There was about this time a devout Woman of the Tribe of *Dan*, who thro' a mistaken Zeal had dedicated a Sum of Money to the Lord, and laid it by, intending her Son should make with it an Idol. Her Son, whose Name was *Micah*, finding the Money, but not knowing to what Use his Mother had devoted it, took it for himself. She missing the Money, and not suspecting her Son, did in his Presence curse the sacrilegious Thief; which so frightened the Son, that he confessed the Fact, and restored it to her, being in all eleven hundred † Shekels of Silver. The Mother having received her Money again, took two hundred Shekels of it, and gave them to a Founder to make an Idol; which being done, she placed it in the House of her Son's Gods; for he had made a * *Teraphim* and an *Ephod*,

* *Stories.* These two Stories are mentioned in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth Chapters of *Judges*; and being disposed toward the End of the Book, seem as if they belonged to later Times; but in the Judgment of most learned Men, they were transacted about this Time. Their Reasons are too many to recount; I therefore choose to insert these Stories here, as the most likely Times for such Evils to have been committed in. For it is plain from the Text, that these Things happen'd when *there was no King* (that is, *Ruler*; for, properly speaking, there had been hitherto no King) in *Israel*; but every Man did that which was right in his own Eyes, Ch. xvii. 6. xviii. 1. xix. 1.

† *Shekels.* Which, if common Shekels, at one Shilling three Pence each, would amount to sixty eight Pounds and fifteen Shillings of *English* Money; but if Shekels of the Sanctuary, double that Sum.

* *Teraphim.* We have already spoken something of *Teraphim* in the Story of *Jacob's* Flight from *Laban*, when *Rachel* took away with her her Father's *Teraphim*. But of this a little more now: *Teraphim* were Images; for the most Part of Men, but sometimes of other Creatures; as particularly Dogs, for their Watchfulness in guarding the House. This

latter Sort were accounted *Tutelar* or *Protecting* Gods, answerable to the *Lares* and *Penates*, or Household Gods, amongst the *Romans*. Those *Teraphim*, which bore the Image of a Man, or at least, of the Head of a Man, were used as Oracles, to be consulted with, and inquired of, in any doubtful or hidden Matter. These were consecrated by Magical Art, to engage some *Evil Spirit* to speak through them, and give Answers to the Enquirers. *Laban's* Gods, which his Daughter *Rachel* stole from him, and are called *Teraphim*, Gen. xxxi. 19. are thought by some to have been such *Oracular Images*; and that she therefore took them that her Father might not, by consulting them, know which Way her Husband was gone. But this with some looks too gross, who rather think they were but the common *Penates*, or Household Gods. But now, though the Times, in which this Story of *Micah* was transacted, were evil, and the People, for want of Government, and by intermingling with the Heathen Nations, were very much corrupted; yet it is hard to conceive that they could be already so far degenerated as to set up these *Oracular Images*, to ask Counsel of the Devil by. But it is probable they thought they might worship God by or through Images, (as too many, who are called

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and " consecrated one of his Sons to be his Priest for a while, till he could procure a *Levite*. Which was not long first; for soon after a certain young Man, that was a *Levite*, and had dwelt some time at *Bethlehem-Judah*, travelling from thence to seek a better Settlement, came in his Way to *Micab's* House in Mount *Ephraim*. *Micab*, glad of this Opportunity, invited the young *Levite* to dwell with him, and be to him a ^w Father and a Priest, offering him for his Wages ten Shekels of Silver by the Year, his Diet, and two Suits of Apparel, one for common wearing, and the other to officiate in. The *Levite* liking the Terms closes with *Micab*, and became one of his Family. On the other hand, *Micab* was as much pleased in the Hopes and Confidence that the Lord would prosper him, because he had gotten a ^x *Levite* to be his Priest.

About the same time some of the Tribe of *Dan* finding the Lot, which fell to them upon the Division of the Land in ^y *Joshua's* time, too little for them, and they not injoying all that neither, (for the *Amorites*, as has been already said, would not suffer them to possess the Valley, which was the best and richest Part,

Christians, at this Day do;) for it is evident from the Text, *Judg.* xvii. 3. that *Micab's* Mother dedicated her Money to the Lord, which she designed for the making of Images; and *Micab* himself, when he made the *Teraphim*, made also an *Ephod*, v. 5. which was a Garment appointed by God for the Priest to wear, *Exod.* xxviii. 4. and by which they did ask Counsel of God, as in the Case of *David*, 1 *Sam.* xxx. 7, 8.

^u *Consecrated*. This was a great Abuse, and imputable to the Licentiousness of those Times, when every one did what seemed right in his own Eyes. What is here, *Judg.* xvii. 5. render'd *Consecrating*, is originally *filling the Hand*, and is a Hebrew Phrase; *Consecrating* being performed as well by filling the Hand with Gifts and Victims, as by the anointing Oil.

^w *Father*. The Priest was call'd a Father for Reverence Sake, being indeed a spiritual Father to the Laity, as having Care of their Souls, and Charge of the Holy Things. Thus are Preceptors cal-

led Fathers to their Pupils, Senators Fathers to the Citizens, Princes Fathers of their Countries, &c.

^x *Levite*. Who this young *Levite* was, is hard to say. He is call'd *Jonathan*, the Son of *Gershom*, the Son of *Manasseh*, *Ch.* xviii. 30. But who this *Manasseh* was is uncertain. *Tremellius* and *Junius* call *Jonathan* *Pronepos Mosibis*, ex *Manasseh*. *Annot.* on *Judg.* xvii. 1. As if *Manasseh* had been *Moses's* Son, *Gershom* *Moses's* Grandson, and this *Jonathan* *Moses's* Great Grandson. But since we read of no more than two Sons that *Moses* had, viz. *Gershom* and *Eliezer*, *Exod.* xviii. 4. this must be consider'd some other Way. The old *Latin* Translation, which is called *St. Jerom's*, reads it, *Jonathan the Son of Gershom, the Son of Moses*. And another says, the *Hebrews* read *Moses* for *Manasseh*; which sounds most likely, if any such *Jonathan* Son of *Gershom* can be found, and whose Age may suit the Time of this Story.

^y *Joshua's*. See *Josh.* xix. 47.

but forced them up into the Mountains) they were fain to seek out more Room to enlarge their Quarters. Whereupon chusing out five Men of Courage, they sent them to take a View of the Country. These Spies in their Travels light upon *Micab's* House, where they were entertain'd; and knowing the young *Levite* by his Voice, they asked him how he came thither, and what Business he had there. He told them what Agreement *Micab* had made with him, and that he was *Micab's* Priest. When they heard this, they desired him to ask Counsel of God, that they might know whether their Journey would be prosperous or no. With this Encouragement they went on till they came to *Laiſh*; where observing the People lived very secure and careless, without any sort of Discipline or Government, they concluded it would be no difficult Matter to conquer them, and take Possession of the Place. And with this Report they returned to their Friends, giving them an Account that the Land abounded with all Necessaries for Life.

The *Danites* embrace the Opportunity, and arming a Party of six hundred Men, they sent them to take Possession of the City of *Laiſh*. These marching through Mount *Ephraim* came in their Way by *Micab's* House, where making a Halt, the five Spies, who were Guides to this Party, and had been there before, acquainted the rest that there were in that House an *Ephod* and *Teraphim*, and a graven and a molten Image, wish them to consider whether they had best tarry there to ask Counsel of the Lord concerning the Success of their Enterprize, or take the *Ephod* and Images with them, to consult upon all Occasions. The last seem'd most expedient; for the five Spies that were the Guides, leaving the Party at the Gate, went into the House: *Micab* being from home, they saluted the *Levite*, whom they sent to the Gate to talk with the *Danites*; and whilst they entertain'd him without, the Guides, having been there before, and knowing the Rooms of the House, plunder'd it of the *Ephod*, the *Teraphim*, and other Images, and brought them

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them out to their Brethren at the Gate. The Priest seeing this was amazed at the Boldness of the Attempt, and asked them what they meant by it. They bid him be silent, and consider whether it were better for him to be a Priest to a single Family, or a whole Tribe in *Israel*. This advantageous Offer soon gain'd the young Priest to their Side, who joined with them, and went off with the Plunder.

Micah returning, and understanding that his Priest and Gods were gone, gathers as many Friends as he could, and pursues the *Danites*. But they were a long Way from his House before he could over-take them: At length coming within View of them, some of the *Danite* Soldiers in the Rear heard them make an Out-cry; and facing about, asked *Micah* why he made such an Out-cry. He told them they had robb'd him. Upon which the *Danites* advised him to be silent; for if they provoked the rest of the Party, it would cost them their Lives. *Micah* finding himself over-match'd, was forc'd to put up the Wrong, and return home without either Gods or Priest.

The *Danites* having thus got rid of *Micah* and his Friends, continuing their March came in a short Time to *Laiſh*; and finding the People quiet and secure, they set the City on fire, and surprizing the Inhabitants, who were busy in putting out the Fire, they put them all to the Sword. Afterwards rebuilding the City, they call'd it *Dan*, after the Name of their Father; and settling there, they set up *Micah's* graven Image, which they had stolen from him; and making the young *Levite Jonathan* their Priest, he and his Sons continued to officiate as Priests to the Tribe of *Dan* all the Time that the House of God was in *Shiloh*, until the Captivity of the Land, which is reckon'd to be till the Ark in *Eli's* Time was taken by the *Philistines*, about three hundred Years after this.

* *Philistines*. See 1 Sam. iv,

This Story is an Instance of the great Apostacy, and Corruption of Religion among the *Israelites*: That which follows is as pregnant a Proof of Immorality and Depravation of Manners amongst them, which was thus:

A *Levite* that dwelt on the Side of Mount *Ephraim* having taken a Wife out of *Bethlehem-Judah*, she prov'd a lewd Woman, and either through Fear or Shame left her Husband, and ran home to her Father at *Bethlehem-Judah*, where she tarried four Months. In which Time her Husband having somewhat digested the Injury went at the four Months End to her Father's, with an Intent to be reconciled to her, and bring her Home with him; in order to which he took a Servant and a Couple of Asses. Being arrived at her Father's House, he was receiv'd with great Joy, and entertain'd for three Days. At the Importunity of the Father he stays the fourth Day, and was kept till the Afternoon the next Day; but the *Levite* resolving to be gone, took his Leave, and with his Wife and Servant set out. By that time they were got as far as ^a *Jebus* the Day was far spent, and the Servant fearing to be benighted desired his Master to put in there. But the Place not being fully possessed and inhabited by *Israelites*, he endeavoured to reach ^b *Gibeah*, whither they arrived just at Sun-set; and sitting down in the Street, as the Custom of Travellers then was, they waited to see who would invite them to a Lodging. After long waiting an old Man came from his Work out of the Field, and seeing Strangers sitting in the Street, went up to them, and saluted them, asked whence they came, and whither they were travelling. The *Levite* told him; and complained of the Incivility of the People, none having invited him to a Lodging, tho' he had his own Provisions with him. The hospitable old Man, who was of Mount *Ephraim*, tho' he dwelt at *Gibeah*,

^a *Jebus*. This was that Part of *Jerusalem* which belonged to *Benjamin*, but was possessed chiefly by the *Jebusites*.

^b *Gibeah*. This City belonged to the Tribe of *Benjamin*, and is also called *Ramah*.

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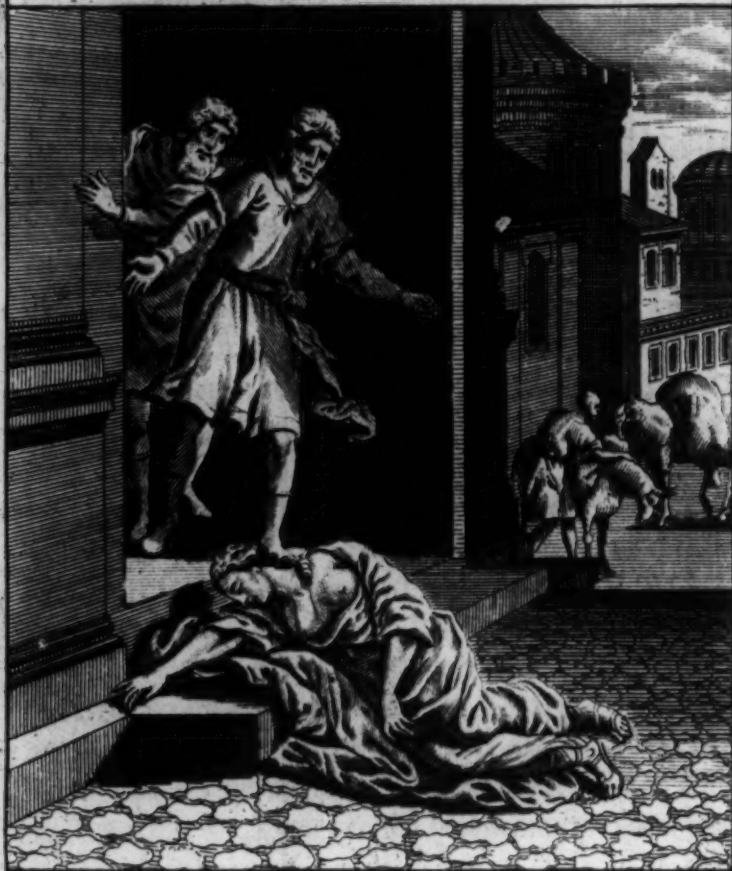
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JUDGES CHAP. XIX.

The Levites concubine found dead.



JUDGES 19. Verse 26.

*Then came the woman in the dawning
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courteously invited them to lodge at his House, where he entertain'd them very frankly. Whilst they were at Supper, the Men of the City having observed where they put in, came to the House, and knocking with great Violence at the Door, demanded of the Master of the House to deliver the Man that came in there, that they might ^c know him. The good old Man, to prevent Danger to his Guests, ventur'd amongst this tumultuous Rabble to appease them, offering them his only Daughter who was a Virgin, and the *Levite's* Concubine, to use at their Pleasure, provided they would not offer any Violence to his Guest. This would not do; whereupon the *Levite* seeing them so outrageous, to save himself, turn'd his ^d Concubine out amongst them, who abused her all Night, not letting her go till Break of Day; and then she returning to the House where her Lord lay, fell down dead at the Door, her Hands lying upon the Threshold. The *Levite* opening the Door, and seeing her lie there, concluded she was asleep, and therefore bid her get up, that they might be going; but when he perceived she was dead, he took her up, and, making no Complaint there, laid her upon one of the Asses, and hasten'd home as fast as he could. And now he had Time to meditate a Revenge suitable to the affront, which he in this horrid Manner express'd; He divides his dead Concubine into twelve Pieces, and sent to every Tribe a Piece, through the whole Coasts of *Israel*, with an Account of the barbarous and inhospitable Treatment he had met with at *Gibeab*, that so the whole Family of *Israel* in general, being made sensible of the Wrong done him and his Concubine, might join in revenging it.

The Fact indeed was in itself most barbarous; but the revengeful *Levite's* expressing his Resentment in a

^c Know him. Just as the *Sodomites* ^d Concubine. She is sometimes called offered to *Lot*, demanding to have the Wife, as in *Ch. xix. 1.* but oftner Concubine. *Levite* delivered to them, that they might abuse him in that unnatural Way called *Sodomy*.

Manner so horrid, advanc'd the Heinousness of the Crime, and made a deeper Impression on the Minds of the *Israelites*, who upon Sight of each Piece of the divided Concubine do unanimously agree, That there never was such a Deed done or seen since the Day that the Children of *Israel* came up out of *Egypt*. And to acquit themselves of the Guilt of so wicked a Fact, the whole Congregation of *Israel* met at *Mizpeh*, that they might there examine the Business before the Lord; where demanding of the *Levite* an Account of the whole Matter, he thus in short sums it up to them: "I came
 " with my Concubine to *Gibeab*, which belongs to *Ben-*
 " *jamin*, to lodge: But the Men of *Gibeab* beset the
 " Houle where I was with a Design to murder me;
 " and my Concubine they have forced, that she is dead;
 " by which they have committed Lewdness and Folly
 " in *Israel*. Whereupon I took my Concubine Home,
 " and having cut her into Pieces, I sent her throughout
 " all the Inheritance of *Israel*. Now ye, being Sons
 " of *Israel*, are concerned in this Abuse as well as I:
 " Therefore consider and advise what is to be done."

When the People had received this Account of the Matter, they were highly incensed against the Men of *Gibeab*, and resolved not to return to their Houses till they had brought the Offenders to condign Punishment. And that they might lose no Time, they agreed to draw ten Men out of every Hundred, an Hundred out of every Thousand, and a Thousand out of every ten Thousand, who should be employed to furnish the Army with Provisions and other Necessaries.

But before they proceed to Extremities, they resolve to send Messengers through all the Tribe of *Benjamin*, to lay the Matter before them, and to demand those Men who had committed this Outrage to be deliver'd to them, that they might do Justice on them. But the People of *Benjamin*, in Contempt of their Brethren the *Israelites*, resolve to stand by the Offenders, and muster up all their Force to defend them. The *Israelitish* Army consisted

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consisted of four hundred thousand able Men; that of *Benjamin* but of six and twenty thousand: A great Disparity, and which shewed the latter desperate. The *Israelites* over-confident of their Strength, and despising the *Benjamites*, who were so few, depending on the Justice of their Cause, never went to ask Counsel of God, (as in such Emergencies they usually did,) whether they should go to War with their Brethren, or no; but taking that for granted, to prevent any Difference that might arise among the Tribes about Precedence in this Expedition, they went up to the House of God only to know which Tribe should lead the Van, and the Lot fell to *Judab*. Upon this the *Israelitish* Army advanced, and sat down before *Gibeah*; from whence the *Benjamites* made a brisk Sally upon them, cut off two and twenty thousand of them, and retreated to the Town with very little Loss. This unexpected Disaster made the *Israelites* sensible of their Neglect, in not inquiring of the Lord whether they ought to have undertaken this War, or no. Wherefore bewailing their Misfortune in the last Action, they ask Counsel of the Lord, (but in an irregular Manner,) who, to punish them for their Presumption, bids them go, but promises them no Success. The heedless *Israelites* taking this for an Assurance of Victory, drew up their Army again before *Gibeah*, offering the *Benjamites* Battel; who being flush'd with their former Success made another bold Sally, and cut off eighteen thousand more of the *Israelites*. The second Defeat brought the *Israelites* to a Sense of their former Presumption and Neglect: Wherefore going up to the House of the Lord, they humbled themselves with Weeping and Fasting that Day, and offer'd Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings before the Lord. And having thus regularly proceeded in their Humiliation, they again enquire of the Lord whether they should attack the *Benjamites*, or forbear: For at this Time the Ark of the Covenant of God was in *Shiloh*, and

* *Phineas* was Priest. And now the Lord having sufficiently corrected the Confidence of the *Israelites*, not only gives them Commission to go against the *Benjamites*, but assures them of Victory.

With this Incouragement the *Israelites* prepare a third Time to attack the *Benjamites*; and to make their Victory the more secure, they lay an Ambuscade in the Meadows behind *Gibeah*, that when the Fight was begun, the *Israelites* by a feigned Flight drawing the *Benjamites* from the City, those that lay in Ambuscade should seize the City, and set it on Fire as a Signal to the main Body of the *Israelitish* Army to rally, and renew the Fight.

Matters being thus disposed, ten thousand choice Troops of the *Israelites* appear before *Gibeah*; which the *Benjamites* seeing sally out of the Town, and fell briskly upon them, killing about thirty of them. The *Israelites* then retiring, as if they were afraid, pretended to fly; and the *Benjamites*, supposing the Day was their own, eagerly pursued them so far, that they were at a Distance from the Town sufficient to give the Ambuscade an Opportunity to seize the Place, and set it on Fire. The main Body of the *Israelitish* Army seeing this faced about, and charged furiously upon the *Benjamites*, who now began to think of retreating to their City; but when by the Smoak and Flame they saw themselves circumvented, they took to the Wilderness, thinking to secure themselves there: But in vain; for being inclosed by the main Army and the Ambuscade, they were easily trodden down. In this Action and the Pursuit five and twenty thousand one hundred of the *Benjamites* were slain; and a thousand more having been destroyed in other Actions, there remained but six hundred Men of the *Benjamites*, who fled to the Rock *Rimmon*, and hid themselves there; all the rest of that Tribe, together

* *Phineas*. This Passage in *Judges* xx. shews plainly, that this Story was transacted early in the Times of the Judges. 28. (rejecting that Rabbinical Dream, that *Phineas* lived three hundred Years,

with their Towns and Cattle, suffered Military Execution.

The Heat of this Action being over, the *Israelites* began to consider how low a Condition they had reduced the Tribe of *Benjamin* to by this general Slaughter, which afflicted them very much: And the rather, because upon their first engaging in this Quarrel they had rashly sworn that no *Israelite* should give his Daughter in Marriage to a *Benjamite*. Upon this they repair to the Tabernacle where the Ark was, and mourned all Day, saying, "O Lord, why is this come to pass, that there should this Day be one Tribe wanting in *Israel*?" Then getting up early the next Morning, they built an Altar there, and offered Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings to the Lord. After which applying themselves to find out some Expedient to elude their rash Oath, and save the sinking Tribe, they recollected that they had at first bound themselves by Oath to put to Death all those who should not appear with them at *Mizpeh*, and join in the common Cause against the *Benjamites*. Upon Inquiry they found that none came from *Jabesh-Gilead* to the Assembly at the Camp: Therefore sending twelve thousand of their best Men to *Jabesh-Gilead*, they commanded them to put Man, Woman and Child to the Sword, except such marriageable young Women as were Virgins, whom they were to bring with them to the Camp. These Troops having done Execution on *Jabesh-Gilead*, as they were commanded, brought away with them four hundred Virgins to the *Israelites*; who immediately sent Heralds to the Rock *Rimmon* to treat with the few remaining *Benjamites*, offering them Peace, and inviting them to return. The poor *Benjamites* gladly embrace the Offer; and coming to the Camp, the *Israelites* bestowed on them the *Gileadite* Virgins for Wives. But the *Benjamites* being six hundred in Number, there was not for every Man one. Upon which they bethought them of another Expedient to supply this Deficiency: Once a Year there was a solemn Feast held

held at *Shiloh*, to which the young Maidens of *Shiloh* used to come, and dance there: The *Israelites* therefore directed the *Benjamites* that wanted Wives to lie in wait in the Vineyards at the Time of the Feast, and when they should see the *Shiloh* Damsels come to dance, they should seize every Man one for his Wife, and carry them away into their own Country, promising them that if any of the Relations of the Damsels should complain, they would skreen them from Danger. The *Benjamites* pursue their Instructions; and watching their Opportunity, took every one his Damsel, and carried them off to their own Inheritance: Where, repairing their Cities, they settled again, and in Time recruited their Tribe.

These Civil and Intestine Quarrels among the Tribes being thus reconciled, the *Israelites* did not long enjoy Peace; for continuing to provoke God by their Profaneness and Irregularities, he again chastises them by their Enemies: The most powerful of whom was *Eglon*, King of *Moab*. Him God raised up to be a Scourge, who otherwise had neither Strength nor Courage to attack *Israel*. But being design'd by the Almighty to be the Instrument of his Vengeance, *Eglon* arm'd the *Ammonites* and *Amalekites*, and fell upon the *Israelites*, whom he defeated, and possessed himself of the City of Palm-trees. And as an Aggravation of their Offence in so suddenly transgressing after their late Deliverance from Bondage, God enlarged their Punishment; for their Servitude was now advanced from eight Years to eighteen, which was the Space of Time they served *Moab*.

But when the *Israelites* through a Sense of their Misery addressed themselves to their God, he raised them another Deliverer in the Person of *Ehud*, the Son of *Gera*, a left-handed Man, by reason of a Lameness in his Right-hand. *Ehud* was a wise and politick Man, and having observ'd the Weakness of the *Israelites* by their eighteen Years Slavery, and the low Condition of the *Benjamites*, that they were not able by open War to attempt any Thing against their Oppressors, he contrives
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first to take off *Eglon* privately; knowing it would be much easier to deal with the *Moabites* when they should be in Confusion for want of a Leader, than while they had their King at the Head of them. To carry on this the more plausibly he repairs to the *Moabitish* Court, where, under Pretence of delivering a Present to the King from his Servants the Children of *Israel*, he is admitted into the King's Presence. When he had delivered the Present, and dismissed his Servants that brought it, he returning to the King told him he had a private Message to him. The King bid him be silent till the Company were gone; who being withdrawn, *Ebud* approaches, and tells the King, he had a Message to him from ^fGod. At that Word, *Eglon*, in Reverence to the Name of God, arose from his Seat, which *Ebud* taking the Advantage of, stabbed him in the Belly with a Dagger, which he had concealed under his Cloaths, so forcibly, that he thrust the Dagger, Haft and all, into his Belly; and the King being a very fat Man, the Fat of his Belly closed over the Dagger, so that he could not draw it out. *Ebud* seeing him dead left him wallowing in his Blood, and shutting the Door after him made the best of his way Home.

King *Eglon*'s Servants seeing *Ebud* depart, return to pay their usual Attendance on their Master; but finding the Door lock'd, they supposed he had a Mind to retire, and therefore withdrew; but after long waiting, and finding the Door still shut, they took a Key and opened it, and to their great Surprise found their King dead upon the Ground. This long Delay of theirs gave *Ebud* a fair Opportunity to escape; which he improv'd by his Speed, and coming to Mount *Ephraim*, he blew a Trumpet, at which Signal the *Israelites* flock'd to him, to whom he related what he had done, and bid them follow

^fGod. This was *Ebud*'s Commission from God to dispatch *Eglon*, and therefore is not to be drawn into an Example by others; for in *Judg. iii. 15.* *Ebud* must be supposed to have acted nothing in this but by the Inspiration of God;

for he is in the Text called a Saviour of the Children of *Israel* raised up by God himself. Therefore this Paraphrase may be allowed on these Words, *I have a Message to thee from God.* that is. *God commands me to slay thee, the Oppressor of Israel.*

him;

him; for God (said he) hath delivered your Enemies the *Moabites* into your Hands. They readily obey him as their Leader, and securing the Fords of *Moab* towards *Jordan*, suffer'd not a Man to pass over; but falling courageously upon the *Moabites*, whilst they were in that Consternation for the Death of their King, and Want of a Leader, they slew about ten Thousand of the chief of them, at the same time delivering *Israel*, and subduing *Moab*.

After the Death of *Ehud* God raised *Israel* another Deliverer, whose Name was *Shamgar*, the Son of *Anath*, a strong and valiant Man; who, when the *Philistines* in another Quarter invaded *Israel*, with no better Weapon than an Ox-goad, slew six hundred of the *Philistines*, and deliver'd them from all dangerous Neighbours, that were Borderers on that Side. After which *Israel* enjoyed a Peace of eight Years. In which time of Liberty and Ease, they grew wanton and forgetful of their former Servitude; which Neglect and Ingratitude of theirs provoked God to raise up other Instruments for their Correction; the chief of which was *Jabin*, who assuming to himself the Title of the King of *Canaan* reign'd in *Hazor*. He was a powerful Prince, well stor'd with all warlike Munition, having nine hundred ^g Chariots arm'd with Iron, and his Subjects a warlike People. This King lorded it over the oppress'd *Israelites* with great Severity for twenty Years; God upon the Repetition and Aggravation of their Transgressions increasing their Punishment. And so cruel were the People to them, that they durst not travel the common Roads upon their ordinary Occasions; but were forced to seek ^h By-ways to avoid their Enemies, so that their Highways were disused: Neither could they in Safety dwell in their Villages, being attack'd by their ⁱ Archers, if they went but out to draw Water; nay, so servile was their Condition, that they were not suffer'd to keep any ^k Arms.

^g Chariots. These Chariots were arm'd with Scythes and Swords, which being driven among the Enemy cut down all near them. *Xenophon*, in his *Cyropædia*, will have *Cyrus* to be the Author of these Chariots; but it is plain from hence,

and from *Josh. xvii. 16.* that they were nine hundred Years before *Cyrus's* time.

^h By-ways. See *Judg. v. 6.*

ⁱ Archers. *Ibid. v. 11.*

^k Arms. *Ibid. v. 3.*

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The poor *Israelites* languishing thus under the Tyranny and Cruelty of their Enemies, God was pleased at last to remember Mercy; and seeing their Sufferings had brought them to a Sense of their Sins, he found out a Way to deliver them, beyond what they could imagine or expect. For it is very much to be suspected, that at this Time the *Israelites*, by the Severity of their Servitude, were so degenerated and dispirited, that the Sex, which boast itself created for Empire, could not at that Time furnish their present Exigencies with a Man fit to be invested with Sovereign Power. For which Reason, in all Probability, *Deborah* the Wife of *Lapidoth* is said to have judged *Israel* at that Time. She was a Prophetess, and the *Israelites* used to come to her for Judgment. To this great Prophetess the Lord communicated his Thoughts of delivering his People, and by his Spirit directed her to send for *Barak*, the Son of *Abinoam*, a brave young Prince of the Tribe of *Naphtali*. He came, and she acquainted him, that it was the Pleasure of the Lord, that he should get together ten thousand Men of the Tribes of *Naphtali* and *Zebulun*, and lead them towards Mount *Tabor*; and to encourage him, she told him in the Name of the Lord, that *Sisera*, General of *Jabin's* Army, with his Army and Chariots, should fall into his Hands. *Barak* considering the Inequality of their Forces, and the Greatness of the Enterprize, and thinking it necessary to have the Prophetess with him, to consult upon all Occasions, as well as to encourage his Men, told her, If she would go with him, he would go; but not else. The undaunted Prophetess consented to accompany him; but pleasantly told him for his Diffidence, that this Expedition should not be for his Honour; for *Sisera* the General should fall into the Hands of a Woman.

Departing together for *Kadesb*, which was *Barak's* Residence, he soon lifted ten thousand Volunteers in *Zebulun* and *Naphtali*, and led them to Mount *Tabor*, the Prophetess still accompanying him. Such a Number of

distress'd People being got together, it soon began to be rumour'd about the Country; and Notice being given to *Sisera* of this Insurrection, he muster'd up all his Force to suppress them, taking with him his nine hundred Chariots of Iron, and down he marches to the River *Kishon*. Which the courageous *Deborah* seeing, being divinely inspired, gave the Signal to the Battel; saying to *Barak*, "Up; for this is the Day, in which the Lord hath delivered *Sisera* into thine Hand." *Barak* upon this marched down the Mountain *Tabor*, and falls upon *Sisera* in the Valley by the River: Whose Army God struck with such Terror, by driving Storms of Rain and Hail in their Faces, that they could not stand before the *Israelites*; who pursuing them put them all to the Sword, except the General *Sisera*; who, not daring to trust to his Chariot, took to his Heels, and fled on Foot, till he came to the Tent of *Jael*, the Wife of ¹ *Heber* the *Kenite*, who dwelt in that Country, which was at Peace with King *Jabin*. *Jael* seeing *Sisera* coming went out to meet him, and invited him to come in. He glad of the Opportunity went in confidently, not suspecting any Danger from her, whose Husband was his Master's Ally.

Being extremely thirsty through the Heat and Fatigue of the Day, he intreated *Jael* to give him a little Water to drink; instead of which she gave him as much Milk as he cared for; and having allay'd his Thirst, he directed her, that if any body should come to inquire after him, that she should not own he was there. And now thinking himself safe, he laid himself down upon the Floor to sleep, *Jael* very officiously covering him with a Carpet;

¹ *Heber*. He was of the Posterity of *Hobab*, otherwise called *Jethro*, the Father-in-Law of *Moses*, and whose People went up with the Children of *Israel*, to dwell amongst them, *Judg.* i. 16. This *Heber*, tho' a *Kenite*, had removed his Family from the rest of the *Kenites*, and pitched his Tent in the Plain of *Zaanaim*, not far from *Kedesh*, where *Barak* lived. These *Kenites*, tho' they were Profelytes, and worshipped the true God, according to the *Mosaic* Law, yet being

Strangers by Birth, and not of the promised Seed, and so not pretending a Right or Title to the Land of *Canaan*, they held it best Policy, in those troublesome Times, to observe a Neutrality, and maintain Peace as well as they could, both with the *Israelites* and *Canaanites*. Upon this Foot it was that there was a Peace between King *Jabin* and the House of *Heber* the *Kenite*; and that gave Confidence to *Sisera* in his Distress to fly to *Heber's* Tent for Protection.

where

where he had not lain very long before he fell fast asleep. Which when *Jael* perceiv'd, she took a Hammer and a long Nail or Tent-pin, and pitching it to the Temples of his Head, she struck it with such Force, that it pierc'd through his Head, and pinn'd him to the Ground; after which she cut off his Head, and so left him. Then going to the Door of the Tent, she soon spy'd *Barak* coming in Pursuit of *Sisera*; whom she went out to meet, and inviting him in told him, she could shew him the Man he sought for; which she accordingly did. By these Means did God assist the *Israelites* in subduing *Jabin* King of *Canaan*; whom they never left fighting with, till they had quite destroy'd him. Upon this Victory the Heroine *Deborah* and her valiant General *Barak* sang this Triumphant Song.

*Let Israel their Avenger's Glory raise
In lofty Notes of everlasting Praise!
Hear, O ye Kings! Attentive Princes hear
A wondrous Song that well deserves your Ear!
When Israel's God from hostile Edom came,
With his own Thunder arm'd, array'd in Flame,
Trembled the Earth, as o'er the Clouds he rode,
The Clouds dissolve to Rain, and down th'incumbent God.
The Mountains Tops at his Approach retire,
Their molten Entrails run in Streams of Fire.
O how unlike those Novel Gods, and vain
Their Hopes, that Succour from them entertain?
Weak, unavailing Names! no Help they yield;
War, War the Gates resound, and War the Field!
Tb' Alarm is giv'n, in vain are Spear and Shield.
By their insulting jealous Lords bereft,
No Refuge, but inglorious Flight was left:
When Deborah arose at Heav'n's Command,
When I arose to save the orphan'd Land.
Bless'd be their Names, the gen'rous few that join'd
To urge the happy Change by Heav'n design'd!*

m. Cant. See Judg. v. 26.

By

By Counsel or by Action, Pen or Sword,
To save their Country, and to help the Lord.
But curse ye ⁿ Meroz; an uncommon Weight
Of Vengeance seize 'em, and a Neuter's Fate!
They would the Spoil, tho' not the Danger share,
Now Sisera is fallen they'll declare.
His Boasts, his fruitless Hopes, his Fears are o'er;
He bow'd, he fell, he sunk, to rise no more.

So let thy Foes, O God! To Dust descend;
But those that love Thee brighter Stars attend!
The Sun himself less glorious far than they;
The Sun, when mounted on the blazing Noon of Day.

✓ To these warlike and tumultuous Transactions, a time of Tranquillity and Rest succeeded. During which the Israelites again provoking God by lapsing into their former Transgressions, he takes them more immediately into his own Hands, and chastises their Presumption and Ingratitude with a severe Famine: Which raging furiously among the Israelites, many of them are forced to quit their Habitations, and seek for Food in a foreign Land. Among the rest, one *Elimelech* of *Bethlehem-Judab*, a Man of Condition and Family, removed with his Wife *Naomi*, and his two Sons *Mablon* and *Chilion*, to the Country of *Moab*, where *Elimelech* soon quits this Life. After whose Death his two Sons, not strictly observing the Law of God, took each of them a Wife of the Women of *Moab*, of base Condition. The Name of *Chilion's* Wife was *Orpah*, and the Name of *Mablon's*

* *Meroz*. What Place this was is not certainly known, tho' very reasonably by some supposed to be *Merom*, the Variation of one Letter making but little Difference, if other Circumstances do but agree, which they seem pretty much to do here. For about an hundred and twenty Years before we find, in *Josh. xi. 1, &c.* that *Joshua* at the Waters of *Merom* killed *Jabin*, King of *Hazor*, one of the Predecessors of this *Jabin*, (King of the same *Hazor*,) whose General, *Sisera*, was slain by *Jael*. Besides, accor-

ding to *Adrichom ex Hieron.* *Merom* was a Lake thirty Furlongs broad and sixty long, situated between *Casarea Philippi* and the Sea of *Galilee*, the Sea of *Jordan* turning through the middle of it. This Lake at the time of the Snow melting on the Mountain *Lebanon* is very full of Water, but at other times in a great measure dry. Those therefore that inhabited about this Lake are cursed, because they did not only refuse Succours to the *Naphthalites*, but underhand favour'd *Sisera*.

Ruth.

Ruth. With these they lived about ten Years, when *Chilion* and *Mahlon* died both childless. The unhappy *Naomi*, thus deprived of her Husband and Children, and left in a strange Country, could with no Satisfaction stay longer in a Place, where she had lost all the external Comforts of Life; but being inform'd that the Famine was over in *Israel*, she resolves to return to her own Country; and accordingly set forward for *Judah*, accompanied with her two Daughters-in-law.

Whilst they were on their Journey, *Naomi*, considering it was a Sort of Cruelty to take her Daughters from their Friends and Relations, advised them to go back; and to shew them it was not out of Dislike to their Conversation, but mere Pity, that she was desirous to part with them, she gave them this affectionate Blessing: "The Lord deal kindly with you, as you have done to me and mine; and grant that ye may marry again to your Content, and enjoy a happy Settlement." Then giving to each a parting Kiss, they in Tears press her to accept of their Company. She endeavours to dissuade them by urging, that if they stay'd in their own Country they might marry again; which they could not propose, if they went with her. At last her Importunity prevailed with *Orpah*, who with Tears taking her Leave of her Mother-in-law, turn'd back to *Moab*. But no Persuasion could prevail with *Ruth*, who with the most pressing Instances urged *Naomi* to take her along with her; assuring her, that nothing should part them, but that the God she serv'd should be her God. *Naomi* seeing the pious Resolution of her Daughter *Ruth*, press'd her no more to return, but on they both go to *Bethlehem*.

Naomi being arrived at *Bethlehem*, where she and her Family had liv'd in good Fashion, her return was generally taken notice of, and her old Neighbours came to congratulate her upon her Arrival in her own Country. It was now the Beginning of Barley-Harvest, (which usually was in the first Month with them) when *Naomi* return'd to *Bethlehem*: And *Ruth* the *Moabite* being an industrious

industrious Woman, though poor, desired *Naomi* to give her leave to go into the Field to glean some Corn. The Mother consented, and she happen'd to go into a Field belonging to *Boaz*, a very wealthy Person of the Family of *Elimelech*, and nearly related to him; and there she glean'd after the Reapers. She had not been long there, before *Boaz* himself came into the Field to look after his Workmen; and having saluted them in a very devout manner, he took notice of *Ruth*, and ask'd his Steward who she was. He told him, she was the *Moabitish* Damsel that accompanied *Naomi* in her Return Home from the Country of *Moab*, and that she had ask'd Leave to glean after the Reapers. *Boaz* having before been acquainted with her dutiful and affectionate Behaviour to her Mother-in-law, his Kinswoman, encouraged her to glean in his Ground, and to keep with his Servants, and fare as they did, and charg'd them not to molest her. *Ruth*, surpriz'd at the unexpected Civility of a Stranger, return'd her Thanks in a most profound Respect and Acknowledgment of his Courtesy. *Boaz* told her he had heard of her affectionate Carriage to her Mother-in-law, and that she was come with her into a strange Country, out of a pious Design, to be under the Care and Protection of the God of *Israel*; whom he solemnly pray'd to recompence her good Actions, and give her a full Reward. After this he treated her at his own Board very liberally; and when his Servants returned to their Work in the Field, he charged them to be civil to her, and to give her an Opportunity of gleaning the more, by dropping some of the Sheaves. Thus *Ruth* continued gleaning among *Boaz*'s Servants till Barley and Wheat-Harvest were over, dwelling still with *Naomi*, to whom she returned every Evening with what she had glean'd, and acquainted her with the great Humanity of *Boaz*. *Naomi*, studious to recompence this tender Affection of her Daughter-in-law, projects how she might ingage her Kinsman *Boaz* to marry *Ruth*, whose Civility she might reasonably imagine proceeded from

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from some other Motive than that of common Courtesy or Humanity. Therefore acquainting *Ruth* that *Boaz* was her near Kinsman, and informing her what the Law of *Moses* required in that Case, she advised her to wash and anoint, and dress her self, and go to *Boaz's* Barn, where he was winnowing his Barley; but not to let it be known she was there, till he had supp'd, and was gone to rest; giving her Instructions what she should do farther.

Ruth follows her Mother's Directions, and going to the Barn placed her self so commodiously, that she could unobserv'd see what pass'd. When *Boaz* had refresh'd himself, he lay down at the end of a Heap of Corn; and *Ruth*, waiting till he was asleep, came softly, and lifting up the Clothes undiscover'd laid her self down at his Feet. *Boaz* waking about Midnight, in a Fright ask'd, who she was? To which she answer'd, "I am *Ruth* thy Servant: ° Spread therefore the Wing of thy Garment over me, for thou art a near Kinsman." *Boaz*, tho' pretty well advanced in Years, was so far from rejecting her, that he commended her Forwardness; and, being a virtuous Man, told her, she had shewn more Piety to her dead Husband, than when he was alive, in raising up ^p Issue to his Name by marrying his Kinsman, and that her Virtue was conspicuous in not following young Men, whether poor or rich. And therefore he assured her, he would not fail to answer her Desire and his Duty; which he had the greater Inducement to do, because she had the general Reputation of a virtuous Woman. But at the same Time he told her, that though he indeed was a near Kinsman, yet there was

° Spread. This was as if she had said, Take me to Wife as the Law directs: For the Phrase of spreading the Skirt or Wing over one, imports a taking such a one into Protection. And because it is the Part of a Husband to protect and defend his Wife from Injuries; therefore to spread the Wing or Skirt over one is used for a Periphrasis of Marriage.

^p Issue. *Boaz* took it for a token of

singular Love to her former Husband, as well as of Devotion to the Religion she was now converted to, that she should chuse to marry her Husband's Kinsman, to keep up her deceased Husband's Name and Family, in Observance of the Law of God; tho' that Kinsman was old in Comparison of her, who was young and beautiful, rather than please herself with some young Man.

another nearer, to whom he must give the Preference, because it was his Right, and that he would communicate the Matter to him next Morning; and if that Kinsman would marry her he might, otherwise he himself would assuredly marry her.

In the Morning early *Ruth* got up, that she might get off undiscover'd, and to avoid Censure of their Reputation and Religion; but that she might not go Home empty-handed to her Mother, *Boaz* gave her six Measures of Barley: With which *Ruth* return'd to her Mother, who received her joyfully, both for the Present of *Boaz*, and his kind Treatment of her Daughter; whom she advised to take no Notice to any of what had pass'd, but patiently to wait the Event; assuring her, that *Boaz* was a Man of Honour, and would perform his Promise.

Boaz, according to his Promise, appear'd that Morning at the Gate of the City, which was in those Days the usual Place of Judicature. There he met with the Kinsman he had mention'd to *Ruth*; and summoning ten more of the chief of the City, he in their Presence acquainted him, that *Naomi*, who was come back from the Country of *Moab*, had a Parcel of Land to dispose of, which belong'd formerly to *Elimelech*: Of which he gave him this publick Notice, that he might^a redeem it, the Right of Redemption belonging in the first Place to him; and therefore he desired to know his Mind in this Matter. The Kinsman readily consented to redeem the Land. But when *Boaz* told him, that at the same Time he must likewise take *Ruth* the *Moabites* to Wife, to raise up the Name of her dead Husband upon his Inheritance, he declined the Business; giving this for a

^a *Redem.* The Reason of this seems to be grounded upon the Law; *Dent.* xxv. 6. by which the First-born of such a Marriage was to bear the Name of the Woman's former Husband that was dead, to keep up his Name in *Israel*; so that if that Kinsman had married *Ruth*, and should have had but one Son by her, that

Son being not to bear his Name, but the Name of her former Husband, he himself should have had no Son to keep up his Name in *Israel*; and so his Inheritance might have been lost from his Name, by passing into another Name and Family; which he was not willing to hazard.

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Reason, That he could not do it on those Terms, without destroying his own Inheritance; and therefore he willingly resign'd his Right of Redemption to *Boaz*; who without any Scruple accepts it; and his Kinsman, according to the Custom of those Times, in Token of relinquishing or transferring his Right, takes off his Shoe and delivers it to *Boaz*. Upon which *Boaz* makes this Declaration to the Elders and all the People present: "Ye are my Witnesses this Day, that I have bought all that was *Elimelech's*, and all that was his Sons, of the Hand of *Naomi*. Ye see likewise I have purchased *Ruth* the *Moabite's* to be my Wife, to raise up the Name of the Dead upon their Inheritance, that their Name may not be lost among their Relations. Of this I call you to witness this Day." To all which the Assembly gave their Acknowledgment, adding a hearty Prayer, that she might be fruitful as *Rachel* and *Leah*, who were the original Raisers of the House of *Israel*. *Ruth* soon conceived, and in due Time was delivered of a Son, whom they named *Obed*; which *Obed* was the Father of *Jesse*, and Grandfather of King *David*, of whom, according to the Flesh, came the Saviour of the World.

Deborah and *Barak* govern'd *Israel* with great Care and Prudence; during whose Administration the *Israelites* enjoy'd a profound Peace. But when *Deborah*

* *Shoe*. This was the manner of confirming Bargains, Sales, Exchanges and Alienations among the *Israelites*. There were two sorts of it: The first was penal; as when a Man refused to marry his Brother's Wife, to raise up Seed to the Deceased, who died childless; for then the Law commanded, *Deut. xxv. 9.* that the Woman should pluck off his Shoe, and spit in his Face, using these Words, *Thus shall it be done to the Man that refuseth to raise up Issue to his Brother's Family*. The second was cessionary, or in token of Resignation, and did not reach to compel the Kinsman in the second, third, or fourth Degree to marry the Widow; but he might transfer his

Right to any other of the Kindred; and as a Sign of his Cession or Translation of his Right, he took off his Shoe and deliver'd it to his Kinsman, who would marry the Widow, in the Presence of the Elders.

† *Came*. Herein is described, how Jesus Christ, who (according to the Flesh) ought to come of *David*; proceeded of *Ruth*, notwithstanding she was a *Moabite* of base Condition, and a Stranger from the People of God: Which is likewise a Type, that the Gentiles should be sanctify'd by him, and join'd with his People, and that there should be one Sheepfold and one Shepherd.

and *Barak* were dead, they fell into their old Apostacy, provoking God by their Idolatry to deliver them into their Enemies Hands: Which he soon did; for he permitted the *Midianites* to over-run their Country, who for seven Years kept them in such Subjection, that they were forced to betake themselves to Dens in the Mountains, and Caves in the Earth, and to fortified Places; from whence in Spring-time they stole out to sow their Land; but towards Harvest the *Amalekites* and *Midianites* came and incamp'd in their Country, and tarried till they had devoured all the Provision and Forage they could find, and then they return'd, leaving the *Israelites* nothing to support Life. The poor *Israelites* being serv'd thus Year after Year, at last grew greatly impoverished; which put them in Mind, that by their Sins they had drawn this Punishment upon themselves, and that the only Remedy was to have Recourse to the Lord, who had permitted these Evils to befall them. Whilst they were supplicating God for Help, he sent a Prophet to expostulate with them for their Ingratitude, by which he brought them to a Sense of their Folly, and his Justice in punishing them.

The People being by a due Humiliation prepared for Deliverance from the sad Oppression under which they labour'd, God immediately provided an Instrument for this great Work in the Person of *Gideon* the Son of *Joash*. At this Time *Gideon* was threshing Wheat, that he might hide it from the *Midianites*: And whilst he was thus employ'd in providing Sustenance for his Family, the Angel of the Lord appear'd to him, and said, "The Lord be with thee, thou mighty Man of Valour." *Gideon* was soon appriz'd by the Manner of this Salutation, that it was a Message extraordinary, and readily replied thus: "If the Lord be with us, why then

¹ *Prophet*. Of this Prophet's Name we have no farther Account, than that he was a Prophet. *St. Augustine* supposes him to be that Angel which soon after appear'd to *Gideon*, but others generally

suppose him to be some Person indued with the Spirit of Prophecy by God, and sent to the *Israelites*, as other Prophets were.

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JUDGES CHAP. VI.

An angel talks with Gideon.

28



JUDGES 6 Verse 21.

*Then the angel of the LORD put forth
the end of the staff that was in his hand,
and touched the flesh & y unleavend cakes:*

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“ is all this befallen us? And where are all his Miracles, which our Forefathers have told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up out of *Egypt*? But now the Lord hath forsaken us, and deliver’d us into the Hands of the *Midianites*.” The Angel looking on him stedfastly said, “ Be courageous, and thou shalt save *Israel* from the Hand of the *Midianites*: Is it not I that send thee? ” But *Gideon*, considering his own Weakness, and the low Condition of his Family, more than the Presence of him that spoke to him, answer’d, “ In what Capacity am I to save *Israel*, since my Family is but poor in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, and my self the least among them? ” The Angel to encourage him said, “ Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the *Midianites* with as much Ease as if they were but one Man.

Gideon upon this began to entertain some Hopes, but desiring to know who it was talk’d with him, he said; “ If now I have found Favour in thy Sight, be pleased to shew me some Token, whereby I may know that it is Thou the Lord that talkest with me: Wherefore depart not hence, I pray thee, till I return with my Offering, and set it before thee.” The Angel promised to tarry; and *Gideon* having prepared a Kid, and some unleaven’d Cakes, he came and presented them before the Angel: By whose Direction having laid them upon the Rock, the Angel with the End of his Staff touch’d the Cakes and the Flesh; upon which Fire came out of the Rock and consumed them; and the Angel instantly disappeared. *Gideon* upon this was sensible that it was an Angel that had appeared to him, and crying out in Despair, said, “ Alas, my Lord God! because I have seen an Angel Face to Face, I shall die.” But the Angel, tho’ *Gideon* could not now see him, to confirm and comfort him, bid him not fear, for he should not die. *Gideon*, in thankful Remembrance of this gracious Interview, and God’s Goodness to him, built an Altar there, and called it *Jehovah-Shalom*, that is, the Lord of Peace.

The same Night the Lord commanded *Gideon* to demolish the Altar of *Baal*, which in those corrupt Times had been erected, and to cut down the Groves there, and build an Altar to the Lord his God upon the Top of the Rock; after which, to sacrifice his Father's "second Bullock upon it, which was seven Years old, and offer it for a Burnt-Sacrifice, with the Wood of the Grove which he was to cut down. *Gideon* readily obeys God; but considering that it would be difficult to do this in the Day-time, he resolves to do it by Night; and taking ten of his Servants to assist him, he did as God had commanded him. The Inhabitants of the Place being inform'd what *Gideon* had done, demanded him of his Father, that they might put him to Death: But *Joash* would not deliver his Son, resolutely saying, "If *Baal* is God, let him revenge himself "on him that destroy'd his Altar." From which Occasion *Joash* called his Son *Gideon Jerub-Baal*; which signifies, Let *Baal* avenge. Thus this Tumult ended.

It was now about the Time when the *Midianites* and *Amalekites*, with other Eastern People, used to come and plunder the Country, who appearing in a vast Body incamp'd in the Valley of *Jezreel*. Upon which *Gideon*, inspired with a more than ordinary Courage, by Sound of Trumpet summon'd all those of his own Family to come in quickly to him. Then sending Messengers thro' the Tribes of *Manasseh*, *Asher*, *Zebulun* and *Naphtali*, they came in such Numbers, that in a short Time he could muster up an Army of two and thirty thousand Men; which were but few in Comparison of the Enemies Army, which consisted of an Hundred thirty-five thousand Men. *Gideon*, considering the vast Odds the Enemy had, beg'd of God to give him some Omen for an Assurance of Success to him and his Men. The

¶ *Second*. This Bullock is thought by the Rabbins and others to be called the second from the Stall in which it stood and was fed, which was the second in Order of Place; and being as many Years old, as their Subjection to *Midian* was,

the destroying this Bullock might in some Measure prefigure the breaking off the *Midianitish* Yoke from the Neck of *Israel* by *Gideon*; whose Name signifies a Breaker or Destroyer.

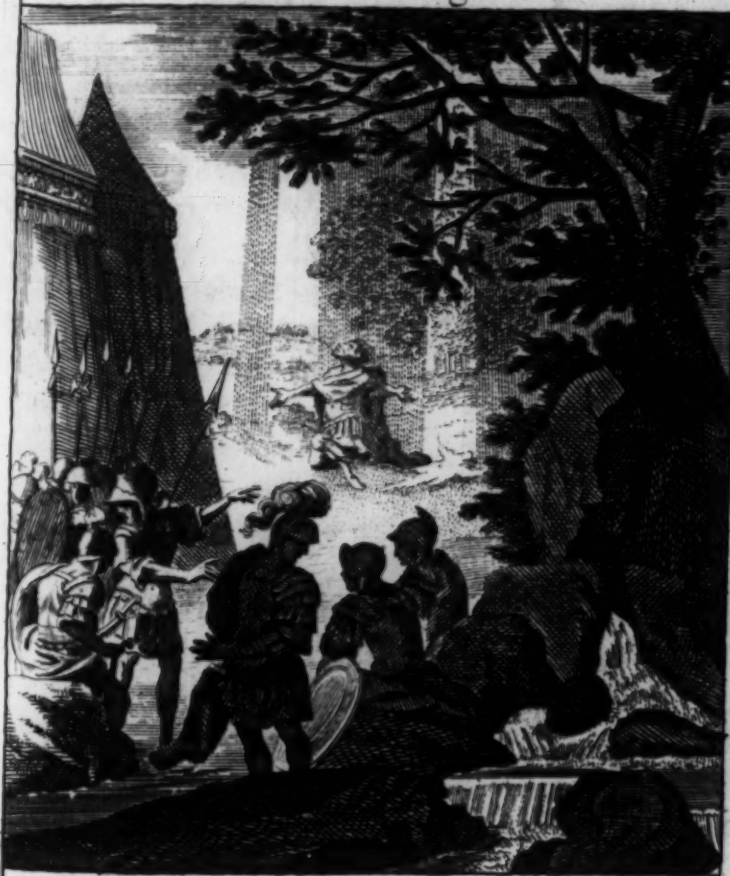
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JUDGES CHAP. VI.

Gideons two signs.

49



JUDGES 6. Verse 37.

*Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in y^e floor:
& if y^e dew be on y^e fleece only, and it be dry upon
all y^e earth beside, then shall I know that etc.*

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Sign he propos'd was, That he laying a Fleece of Wool on the Floor, the Dew should be upon the Fleece only, and the Earth round about it should be dry. Which the next Morning was done; for the Ground about it was dry, but the Fleece so full of Dew, that he wrung a Bowl full of Water out of it. Then ^w inverting the former Manner, he desired that the Fleece might be dry, and the Ground dewy; which was likewise done. *Gideon*, being fully convinced by this double Miracle, resolves forthwith to attack the Enemy. But God knowing the Folly and Ingratitude of the *Israelites*, and rightly foreseeing, that if with this Army they should conquer the *Midianites*, they would vainly impute it to their own Courage and Numbers, and not to his Assistance; therefore order'd *Gideon* to make Proclamation in the Camp, that whosoever was afraid should have Liberty to return home. Upon which two and twenty thousand quitted this Expedition, only ten thousand remaining with *Gideon*. This was a very inconsiderable Number in Comparison of the numerous Host of the *Midianites*: But yet as few as the *Israelites* were, it came within the Verge of Possibility, that they might defeat their Foes with this Handful of Men: And therefore God, thinking them too many, and resolving that the whole Action and Victory should appear to be his doing, order'd *Gideon* to bring his Soldiers down to the Water, where he would give him a Sign to direct him what Men to select for this Business; which was this: They, that took up Water in their Hands and lapped it, should go with him; but they, who laid down to drink, should not go. Only three hundred of them drank out of their Hands; whom God commanded him to keep with him, and dismiss the rest. But lest *Gideon*, upon God's reducing his Army to so small a Number as three hundred Men, should grow diffident of the pro-

^w *Inverting*. It may reasonably be supposed, that *Gideon* for his own Satisfaction would not have been thus impertinent to require a Repetition of the Sign;

but that he rather did it to encourage his Men, and to take off all Suspicion of Art or Contrivance.

mis'd Success, God bids him take his Servant *Phura*, and late at Night go to the Enemies Camp and listen; where he should hear that which would encourage him. Which he accordingly did; and there he heard a Soldier expounding a Dream to another, which was so in Favour of the *Israelites*, that he heard his own Name mention'd with this Advantage, that God delivered the *Midianitish* Army into the Hand of *Gideon*.

Gideon having heard this, in humble gratitude bows himself to God; and getting back undiscovered put his Men in order, dividing them into three Companies, an hundred in each; he gave to every Man a Trumpet and a Pitcher with a burning Lamp in it, charging them to observe his Motions, and do just as they should see him do. *Gideon* having thus dispos'd this little Body of Men, put himself at the Head of one of them, and giving the Signal by breaking the Pitchers and sounding their Trumpets, the rest did the like, and with a terrible Shout they cried out, *The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon!* This Alarm affected their Eyes and Ears with unusual Objects, and increas'd by the Horror of the * Night, so added to their Confusion, that mistaking their own Party, they fell on each other's Sword; God having before dispos'd the *Midianites* for Destruction, so that *Gideon* and his Army gain'd an easy Victory, having nothing to do but to pursue a flying timorous Enemy. In which they were assisted by those that upon Proclamation had deserted the common Cause; who, tho' they were afraid to fight, yet had Courage to pursue. *Gideon*, to make sure Work, and to prevent the *Midianites* for some Ages to give *Israel* any Disturbance,

* Night. It is said, *Judg. vii. 19.* That this Action began at the beginning of the middle Watch; which, dividing the Night from six to six into four Watches, as most do, should answer to ten at Night with us. But that seems too early, considering how much time must be spent, after *Gideon* had order'd to set forward, in his going to the *Midianitish* Camp, staying there to hear the Dream and the

Interpretation of it, returning back again, disposing his Men, and giving the necessary Orders for the Assault. *Drusius* on this Place dividing the Night into three Watches only, supposes this to be called the middle Watch, as being the middlemost of the three. Such a Division running the middle Watch an Hour farther, makes the beginning of it answer to our eleven at Night.

sends to the *Ephraimites* to possess themselves of the Passes on the *Jordan*, that so, few or none of them might escape. Which they accordingly perform'd, taking *Oreb* and *Zeeb*, two *Midianitish* Princes, whom they slew, and then followed the Pursuit: Which *Gideon* and his Party continued very closely till they came to *Succoth*, where being faint and weary they halted, and *Gideon* desired of the Inhabitants some Refreshment for his Men. The Princes of *Succoth* knowing that *Gideon* with his small Party was in chase of *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*, two of the Kings of *Midian*, who with fifteen thousand Men were fled to *Karcor*, instead of giving *Gideon* and his Soldiers any Refreshment, ridicul'd him on the Account of his little Army, and in Derision ask'd him, whether he was so secure of Victory over the Princes he pursu'd, as to demand Relief of them? This unmannerly and inhospitable Treatment so incens'd *Gideon*, that he told them, If the Lord gave him Success against *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*, he would make them repent their Incivility. The same he threatned to the Inhabitants of *Penuel*, for the like Rudeness; and with his fatigued Party continued the Pursuit till he came to *Karcor*, where the two *Midianitish* Princes with their rallied Forces lay thoughtless of Danger. But *Gideon* taking the Advantage of this their Security, surpriz'd and defeated them, taking the two Kings Prisoners, whom he brought in Triumph with him to *Succoth*: And call'd the Chiefs of the Place, Seventy-seven in Number, who had before upbraided him, to a severe Account, chastising them with Thorns and Briars, as he had before threatned them. Nor was he less sparing to *Penuel*, whose Fortifications he demolished, and slew the Governors.

The two captive Kings, *Zeba* and *Zalmunna*, had in their March laid all waste before them, and put many to the Sword; amongst whom *Gideon's* Family shar'd the common Fate of the distress'd at *Tabor*; and *Gideon*, intending to shew Mercy to the two Kings, if they had shewed any to his House, demanded, what Manner of
Men

Men they were whom they had slain at *Tabor*; who answered somewhat flatteringly, that they were like him, having the majestick Appearance of Royal Children. *Gideon*, from their Answer concluding they were his Brethren, whom they had slain, declar'd, if they had spared them, he would have sav'd their Lives; but since they had kill'd his Brethren, they must expect no Mercy. Then commanding his Son *Jether* to fall upon them, he being but a Youth, and somewhat timorous, *Gideon* dispatched them with his own Hand; ordering them to be strip'd of their Royal Ornaments, and their Camels of their rich Trappings and Furniture.

The *Ephraimites*, who had slain *Oreb* and *Zeeb*, brought their Heads to *Gideon*, to let him see what Service they had done; and beginning to quarrel with *Gideon* for not calling upon them at the first, he wisely pacified them by magnifying their Service and Success in the Pursuit. And now the Strength of *Midian* being thus broke by the Slaughter of their whole Army, *Israel* enjoyed a Peace of forty Years.

The *Israelites* fond of *Gideon's* Courage and Conduct in this great Deliverance, resolve to crown his Merit with the Settlement of the Government on him and his Family. But *Gideon*, well knowing the Honour of this Victory was not due to him, but God, modestly and generously declin'd their Offer, saying; "I will not rule over you, neither shall my Son, but the Lord shall rule over you: Yet to let you see I do not slight your Kindness, I will request one Thing of you; and that is, that you will give me the Ear-rings of your Plunder." To this they all readily consented, and spreading a Garment on the Ground, they threw in the Ear-rings, which by Weight amounted to one thousand seven hundred ^y Shekels of Gold; besides the rich Ornaments and Robes of the Kings, with the Chains that

^y *Shekels*. If the Shekel of Gold was in value fifteen Shillings of English Money, as *Gedwyn* computes it; these one thousand seven hundred Shekels would amount to one thousand two hundred seventy and five Pounds.

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were upon the Camels Necks. Of this Gold *Gideon* made an² Ephod, and plac'd it in his own City *Opbrab*, where he dwelt, as a Monument of this Victory. Which in Time, by a wrong Use, and contrary to the Will of *Gideon*, prov'd a Snare to his Family, and indeed to the whole House of *Israel*.

After this Victory *Gideon* lived forty Years, he and all *Israel* injoying a profound Tranquillity, But no sooner was he dead, than *Israel* fell into their old Sins of Idolatry and Ingratitude, not only to God, but to the Memory of *Gideon* their Deliverer. *Gideon* by several Wives had seventy Sons; and by a Concubine he had one Son, whom he named *Abimelech*. And tho' *Gideon* had refus'd the Government of *Israel*, both for himself and his Sons, yet as soon as he was dead, his Son *Abimelech*, an aspiring Youth, suggesting to his Mother's Family at *Shechem*, that his seventy Brethren would usurp the Government over them, advis'd them to consider, whether it would not be better for them to be govern'd by one, than by seventy Persons, at the same Time putting them in Mind, that he was of their Family and Kindred. His Relations upon this Suggestion propos'd Advancement to themselves, which they insinuated to the *Shechemites*; who closing with the Project, contrive how to advance *Abimelech* to the Go-

² *Ephod*. The Ephod was the upper Garment which the Priest wore upon his Shoulders. *Gideon's* Design in making this Ephod is variously question'd by Commentators. Some will have it, that he made an Idol, and that from *Judges* viii. 27. *Israel went a Whoring after it, which was the Ruin of Gideon and his Family*. But this Inference is taken wrong; for who can suppose, that a Man familiar with God, and chosen by him, as *Gideon* was, after so signal a Victory, as he by God's immediate Assistance and Direction had gain'd, should turn Idolater? Others think that *Gideon* made of this Gold a Military Garment, as a Monument of this Victory, which the *Israelites* after turn'd into an Idol. But St. *Augustin*, with some more seem to take it right, and by the Ephod understand sacerdotal Ornaments

in general, and other necessary Utensils belonging to the Priestly Office; which the *Israelites*, after *Gideon's* Death, perverted to idolatrous Uses. For the Text says, during *Gideon's* Life, which lasted forty Years after this Victory, the *Israelites* lived peaceably forty Years, and that *Gideon* died in a good Age; which we cannot suppose if he had been an Idolater; nor can it be infer'd from hence, that his House was ruin'd in his time, for he left seventy Sons behind him; so that this Ruin befel his Family in the general Ruin of *Israel*, when they fell into intestine Feuds and Idolatry. So that we may justly conclude that *Gideon* made this Ephod with no other Intention, but that it might be a lasting Monument of the Victory obtained by *Israel* over *Midian*.

vernment;

vernment; and that Money might not be wanting to forward the Design, they took some out of the Treasury of their God *Baal-berith*, and gave it to *Abimelech*, who with it hired a Company of dissolute Fellows to attend him. With these Ruffians he repaired to his deceased Father's House at *Ophrah*, where he seiz'd sixty-nine of his Brethren, and slew them upon one ^a Stone; the youngest, named *Jotham*, having timely Notice, escaping. Soon after this bloody and unnatural Execution, the *Shechemites* having nothing to fear from *Gidoen's* House, assembled together at *Millo*, and chose *Abimelech* ^b King.

When young *Jotham* heard this, he went to the Top of Mount *Gerizim*, where in a ^c Parabolical Oration he represented to the *Shechemites*, how his Father *Jerub-Baal* (*Gideon*) having refus'd to have the Government of *Israel* settled upon him and his Family; and that they had now disposed of it to one, as much inferior in Virtue and Honour to *Gideon* and his lawful Sons, as the Bramble is to the Olive, Fig-Tree or Vine; he expostulated the Injury done to his Family, and reproach'd them with their Ingratitude: "If you
" have done truly and sincerely in making *Abimelech*
" King; and if you have dealt well with *Jerub-Baal*
" and his House, who merited so well of you: (For
" my Father fought for you, and delivered you from
" the Oppression of *Midian*, and yet you have risen up
" against my Father's House this Day, and have slain
" his Sons, and made *Abimelech*, the Son of his Con-
" cubine, King, because he is your Brother:) If you
" have done well in this, then rejoice in *Abimelech*,

^a Stone. Some will have this Stone to be an Altar, dedicated by *Abimelech* to the Idol *Baal*, and erected in the same Place, where his Father *Gideon* had before destroyed the Altar of *Baal*, to recompence the Disgrace done by him to the Idol.

^b King. In this Choice there were neither the Call of God, nor the Consent of

the People; (who seldom, except in a tumultuous manner, had any thing to do with things of this nature) for *Abimelech* was not appointed King by the Body of the *Israelites*, but by a few disorderly seditious *Shechemites*, without the Knowledge of *Judah* or the other Tribes; and reigned only in *Shechem*.

^c Parabolical. See *Judg.* ix. 8.

" and

“and let him rejoice in you. But if not, let ^dFire
“come out from *Abimelech* and devour the Men of
“*Shechem*, and the House of *Millo*; and let them de-
“vour him.” *Jotham* having thus delivered himself
to the *Shechemites* made his Escape to *Beer*, where he
liv’d secure from *Abimelech*’s Rage. And within three
Years afterwards his Curse was verified both upon *Abi-
melech* and the *Shechemites*; for they conspired against
Abimelech, attempting to seize or kill him. But being
disappointed of their Purpose, they join’d another pro-
fligate Wretch, and his Company, one that liv’d by
the Spoil of others, as the *Shechemites* did. His Name
was *Gaal*, the Son of *Ebed*, an impudent Boaster, but
a very Coward.

Gaal being set at the Head of this dissolute Gang,
ravag’d the Country uncontroll’d for some Time, spoil-
ing the Vineyards of the *Shechemites* who made *Abime-
lech* King; and in their Mirth and Jollity they despised
Abimelech; but none spoke with more Contempt of him
than *Gaal*. The wild Carriage of this foolish Fellow
soon reach’d the Ear of *Zebul*, who was *Abimelech*’s
Vice-Roy in *Shechem*; but he not being strong enough
to chastise him for his Insolence, sends privately to *Abi-
melech*, to acquaint him that *Gaal* and his mad Crew were
come to *Shechem*, and had fortified the City against
him, advising him to come by Night, and lie in Am-
bush till the next Morning, that so he might sur-
prize them. *Abimelech* approves of the Stratagem,
and forthwith put it in Execution; which succeeded
so well, that *Gaal* and those that followed him were
defeated and slain; and the next Day he stormed the
Place and took it; and to express his Resentment more
furiously, after he had demolish’d the City, he sowed
it with ^eSalt. But during these Transactions, some
that

^d Fire. That is, let *Abimelech* be a
Scourge to the *Shechemites*, and they to
him, in Expiation of their Injustice and
Ingratitude to the House of *Gideon*.

^e Salt. This was an old Custom of
punishing Cities for Treachery. Not that
the Strowing of Salt signified drying
up, or rendering of the Soil barren;
(for

that escap'd the Fury of the Conqueror's Sword, and had fled to the Tower, seeing the Houses of the City thrown down, not supposing themselves safe in the Tower, took Sanctuary in a Fort belonging to the Temple of their God *Berith*: Which *Abimelech* hearing, he takes an Ax in his Hand, and commanding his Army to do the same, he marches up to mount *Malmon*, where grew a Grove of Trees, and cutting down a Bough, he laid it on his Shoulder and brought it to the Fort. The rest did the same, and when they had laid the Boughs together, *Abimelech* set them on Fire; by which about a thousand Men and Women were destroyed.

This Success encourag'd *Abimelech* to attack the City of *Thebez*, which he took by Storm: But there being a strong Tower in the City, the Inhabitants fled thither, and maintain'd it for some Time against all the Force of *Abimelech*; which so irritated the impatient Conqueror, that pursuing his Fate, he came near the Tower to encourage his Men, and facilitate the taking it by his Presence; but pressing too near the Door, with a Design to have set it on Fire, a Woman from above cast down a Piece of a Millstone upon his Head, which broke his Skull. *Abimelech* finding himself mortally wounded, call'd hastily to his Armour-bearer, and commanded him to dispatch him, that it might not be said he died by the Hand of a Woman. His Servant obeys him, and the Report of his Death is no so soon rumour'd among the Troops, but they dispers'd: Thus were *Abimelech* and the *Shechemites* Scourges to each other, and *Jotham's* Curse compleated in the Fate of both.

Tola the Son of *Phua*, Uncle by the Father's Side to *Abimelech*, of the Tribe of *Issachar*, was appoint-

for there was no Occasion for that in an inhabited Town) but to shew the Detestation of their Rebellion; and that hereafter none should rebuild or repeople it. In this Action part of *Jotham's* Curse

was accomplish'd; for *Abimelech*, tho' not a lawful King, yet serv'd the *Shechemites* justly, who after they had made him their King, revolted from him.

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ed Ruler or Judge of *Israel* in his Stead. Of whom nothing is recorded, but that he govern'd *Israel* three and twenty Years. To him succeeded *Jair* of *Gilead*, who reigned two and twenty Years. After which, God being provok'd by the Idolatry of the *Israelites*, he permitted the *Philistines*, *Ammorites* and *Ammonites* to over-run their Country as they pleas'd for eighteen Years: And in the last Year the *Ammonites* bent their whole Force against the Tribes of *Judah*, *Benjamin* and *Ephraim*. The *Israelites* finding themselves not able to deal with the vast Numbers of their Enemies, become sensible of their Follies, by which they had provok'd God to punish them thus; and therefore acknowledging their Sin of Idolatry, they beg of God to assist them this one Time. God upbraids them with their Ingratitude, and to increase the Pungency of their Sorrow, bids them go cry to the Gods which they had chosen, and try if they can deliver them in the Time of their Distress. This was a cutting Reproof to the *Israelites*. However, to recover God's Favour and Protection they reform'd; for they put away their Idols, and served the Lord. This Method carried some Weight with it, and God's Mercy return'd as fast as their Repentance; appointing them Means to effect their Deliverance. There was at that Time in the half Tribe of *Manasseh*, which settled on the other Side of *Jordan*, a Man of Note amongst his People, whose Name was *Gilead*, of the Family of that *Gilead* the Son of *Machir*, to whom *Moses* gave the City ^f*Gilead*, from whence the Family were called *Gileadites*. This *Gilead* had several Sons by his Wife; and he had one Son by a ^gConcubine, whom he named *Jephthah*. When *Gilead's*

^f *Gilead*. See *Numb.* xxxii. 4.

^g *Concubine*. *Jephthah* was undoubtedly a Bastard, and consequently could claim no Right of Inheritance or Share of his Father's Fortune or Estate by the old Law, *Deut.* xxiii. 2. Nor were Bastards allow'd to be Priests in those Days; as likewise now-a-days, by reason of the Infamy of the Parents, and their own

corrupt Morals, too often proceeding from the Neglect in their Education. From hence some may be apt to call in Question God's Dispensation, in making *Jephthah* so great an Instrument of his Glory. To which I answer: 1. God hath prescribed Laws to Men, but none to himself; and can alter his Dispensation according to the Circumstances and Conditions

lead's lawful Sons were grown up, they thrust out *Jephthah*, telling him, that being not born in lawful Matrimony, he should have no Inheritance among them. *Jephthah* upon this, expecting worse Usage, hasten'd from them, and took up his Station in the Land of *Tob*; which Place being very subject to the Depredations and military Expeditions of the Enemy, *Jephthah* the rather chose for his Residence, being himself naturally brave and forward upon Occasion. In their Excursions against the Enemy he always distinguish'd himself, so that at last he was courted to accept a Command of a Parcel of young Fellows, with whom he went a foraging.

In this Time of frequent skirmishing, the *Gileadites* being hardly press'd by the *Ammonites*, resolv'd upon a War, but wanted a General. Wherefore at a general Meeting of their Chiefs it was agreed on, that he that should first attack the *Ammonites* should be their General. Then bethinking themselves of *Jephthah*, whom they knew to be a Man of Courage and Conduct, they address'd themselves to him, and offer'd him the Command of their Army. *Jephthah* surpriz'd at this sudden Change, ask'd them what they meant, who had expell'd him his Father's House; and could they expect any Succour from him in their Distress? They acknowledg'd their present Distress was the only Motive of their coming, and repeated their Instances to him to go with them.

Jephthah considering the Case and Temper of the People, who had once us'd him ill, and probably might do so again, was resolv'd to be upon sure Terms with them: "If I go along with you (says, he) and succeed against the *Ammonites*, shall I be your Ruler afterwards?" Their Necessity was so pressing at this

Conditions of Men without Violation in a human Sense. 2. He dispens'd with the Law in this Case, to shew that those that are basely born ought not to despond, but by a virtuous and good Life expect

a Share of God's Blessings, they being excluded from the Benefit of the Law, not by their own, but by their Parent's Fault.

Time,

Dispute
Or. No

Time, that they readily consented, solemnly ingaging that he should. Upon this *Jephthah* went with them, and the People made him Captain over them; *Jephthah* repeating the Covenant or Agreement between them and him before the Lord in *Mizpeh*.

Jephthah having the Security he proposed for the Establishment of the Government upon himself, sends Ambassadors to the King of *Ammon* to demand the Reason of his invading the *Israelites*. To which the *Ammonitish* King reply'd, that the Land was his, and that the *Israelites* upon their coming out of *Egypt* took it from the *Ammonites*; which now he demanded, or would make them restore it. *Jephthah* by other Ambassadors tells him the Case from the Beginning: That the *Israelites* in their Passage from *Egypt* being denied to pass thro' the Countries of *Edom* and *Moab*, were forc'd to fetch a great Compass till they came to the Land of the *Amorites*; where they were not only refus'd a Passage, but attack'd in an hostile manner by the *Amoritish* King, whom the *Israelites* defeated in a pitch'd Battel, fairly conquering not only the Kingdom of the *Amorites*, but whatsoever else belonged to *Sihon* the *Amoritish* King: Who having before taken from the King of *Moab* the Land now in^s Dispute, it fell with the rest by Conquest from the *Amorite* to *Israel*; besides, he confirm'd *Israel's* Title by a long Prescription of three hundred Years peaceable Injoyment. But these Reasons would not do with the King of *Ammon*, who march'd directly against the *Israelites*, and was by them as warmly received. But before the Action began, *Jephthah*, the more readily to secure himself of Victory, made this Vow to the Lord: "If (says he) "thou wilt give me Success against the *Ammonites* this "Day, whatsoever cometh forth of mine House to "meet me, when I return, I will surely consecrate to "the Lord, ^b or I will offer it up for a Burnt-Offering!

Y 2

To

^s Dispute. See *Numb.* xxi. 26.

^b Or. No body can read *Jephthah's* Translations expresse and represent it, without

Vow, and the Execution of it, as most

To this Victory of *Jephthah's* a Civil War succeeded, between the Tribe of *Ephraim* and the Tribe of *Gilead*.

The

without Horror and Amazement. To find a Man, and that not a wild *Barbarian*, but an *Israelite*, offering in a Burnt-Offering a young, innocent, and, no Doubt, beautiful and virtuous Maid; to find an indulgent, fond Father burning the Fruit of his own Body, his own Child, nay and his dutiful and obedient Child too; the Object of his Hopes and present Comforts; to find him, whom the Apostle lists in the Catalogue of the most pious and faithful Worthies of the Old Testament, vowing to offer a human Sacrifice to God, at the very Time in which the Scripture says, the Spirit of the Lord was upon him; and putting his Vow afterwards in Execution, tho' human Sacrifices were hateful to the Lord, provoked him utterly to destroy the *Canaanites*, and kindled his Indignation against the *Israelites*, when they brought the King of *Moab* to the sad Necessity of offering his eldest Son for a Burnt-Offering upon the Wall of his City, 2 Kings iii. 27. I say, to find all this is very puzzling and unaccountable. But it is very strange, that Translators should have render'd several Passages of this Vow in favour of such a cruel and barbarous Sense; especially ours, who knew that the Words could very well admit of a very different and reasonable Meaning, as may be seen in the Notes they have set down in the Margin of the 31st and 40th Verses of that Chapter. No body can deny, but that the Word which is render'd *and*, signifies *or*, in a great many Places of Scripture: Tho' some there are who say, that the Propriety of Speech will not admit of translating *or* for *and* in this Place. But surely they would not think so, if they had consider'd, that the Words, *shall be the Lord's*, should be more properly render'd, *shall be consecrated to the Lord*; that is, dedicated and set apart for God's special Service as the *Nazarenes* were. And that it is in such a Case as this, that *Jephthah* is said to *have done according to his Vow*, is clear, because it is immediately subjoined, *And she knew no Man*; for if she was sacrificed just as she came down from the Mount, this Expression is altogether superfluous, because it is plain enough from her bewailing her Virginity for two

Months, that she had known no Man before; and it is very certain she could know no Man after. So that it is very natural to understand the Words thus; That *Jephthah* according to his Vow had set apart his Daughter for God's special Service, and that she continued unmarried; which will more fully appear, if we consider, that the Words, which are render'd *to lament* in the following Verse, signify also to talk with. But against this it is said, that Parents had no Power to oblige their Children to a single Life. To which I answer, 1. That the Objection militates more against the other Opinion. For if the want of a Right to do a Thing be an Argument that that Thing is not done, then the more Degrees of Injustice and Unlawfulness there are in any Thing, the more boldly we may conclude, that it has not been done. So that if it follows, that if *Jephthah* did not oblige his Daughter to perpetual Virginity, because he had no just Power to do so, then it is most evident that he did not sacrifice her, because such an Action was impious and barbarous, and contrary to the Laws of God, of Nature and Humanity. 2. *Jephthah's* not having a Right to oblige his Daughter to perpetual Virginity, only proves that he should not have done it, and not that he did it not. For he might have thought he had a Right, or out of blind Zeal fancied himself obliged to perform his inconsiderate and unlawful Vow; and it is much more reasonable to suppose this, than to imagine him to have been so grossly ignorant, as not to have known the Barbarity and Impiety of human Sacrifices, or so very stupidly zealous, as to have performed so abominable an Action, if he could have been capable of vowing it. But then, 3. It cannot be proved, that Fathers had not such a Right under the Law. It's plain they had a Power to dedicate their Children to God's peculiar Service, and to oblige them to several Things, somewhat uneasy to Flesh and Blood. It's likewise plain, that Fathers were to determine what was reasonable for their Children, while under their Care, to vow and promise; because the Vows made by such Children signified nothing without the Father's Consent,

The Ephraimites were an ambitious quarrelsome People, and

Consent; but that if the Father did allow them, *Every Vow and Bond with which they bound their Soul, was to stand*, Numb. xxx. 4, 5. From which it appears, that Parents might advise their Children to reasonable Vows, and, with their Consent, bind them to any Thing that was not unlawful, and that if the Father did vow any Thing in the Name of his Child, which the Child did not agree to, that then the Father was forgiven; as the Children were when their Vows were disallowed by their Father, which is sufficient to answer this Objection.

But it is farther said, that if this had been all that *Jephthah* had vow'd, he had not been so much troubled as he was, when at his Return in Triumph his Daughter met him; for it is said, *He rent his Clothes, and said, alas my Daughter, thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me*. But they that think so, seem to be Strangers to the Old Testament Notions, and to human Nature. It appears from several Places of the Old Testament, that the being without Children, and consequently perpetual Virginity, was look'd upon as a Curse and Reproach; and how desirous Men are to see their Posterity increase, is very evident. So that it is no way strange to find *Jephthah*, troubled and rending his Clothes, when his only Child was to live and die under this Reproach, when he saw his Family extinct, and himself excluded from all Hopes of Posterity, and particularly from the Hopes of having the *Messiah* to come of his Seed; which was the general Hope and Desire of all the *Israelitish* Women.

But besides what hath been urged against *Jephthah's* sacrificing his Daughter, what we have before mention'd of the translating the *or* instead of *and*, we may very fairly suppose, that by this Vow, *Jephthah* had regard to the Fitness of the Subject, or Thing vowed for a Burnt-Offering. So that if what came forth to meet him were not fit for a Sacrifice, then it should be offered for a Burnt-Offering. Now the Things, that were not fit for Sacrifice, were Mankind and unclean Beasts and Birds. But tho' these might not be offered in Sacrifice, yet they might be vowed, and afterwards

be redeemed with Money, at the Valuation of the Priest, or not redeemed, at the Vower's Choice; and if not redeemed, might be sold, as appears by the Law, *Levit. xviii. 21.*

It hath been objected, that *Josephus*, *Philo*, and many of the Fathers, are for the common Notion of *Jephthah's* sacrificing his Daughter. I have as great a Veneration for the Ancients as any, but we are to follow no body blindly. It is very probable, that the Fathers believed so on the Testimony of these two *Jews*; and so should I too, if they had any certain Tradition to build their Assertion on. But since they want this, it's to be look'd upon as their private Opinion, for which we are to have no greater Value, than the Reasons, which they give for it, do deserve. The Fathers were too much wedded to the Fictions and Fancies of the *Jews*, and especially of *Josephus* and *Philo*; which often betrayed them into the Belief of several ridiculous Whims, and particularly of that senseless Opinion of the Angels begetting Giants on the Women that were before the Deluge; which they took to be the Meaning of these Words in *Genesis*, *That the Sons of God went in unto the Daughters of Men*.

In *Judg. xi. 40.* we read, That the Daughters of *Israel* went yearly to lament *Jephthah's* Daughter; but the Margin more properly says, *to talk with her*, in which *Pagnide*, *Arrius Montanus*, *Trismellinus* and *Junius* do agree; and by this Version of *talking with her*, may reasonably be meant that they went yearly to visit her after her being dedicated to the Service of God. From which likewise may very well be inferred, That she was alive long after her Father had performed his Vow upon her, and after his Death too; for he reigned over *Israel* but six Years.

Jephthah's sacrificing his Daughter is by our ingenious Countryman *Dr. Brown* placed among his *Vn'gar Errors*, where he very learnedly refutes it by Authority of Scripture and Reason. In fine, from what hath been said, it is reasonable to conclude, that *Jephthah* did not sacrifice his Daughter; and that part of *ver. 31.* of *Judg. xi.* *shall be the Lord's and I will offer it up for a Burnt Offering*, ought thus to be translated, *I will*

and this was ⁱ not the first Instance of their Temper, which formerly went no further than Words: But now the mutinous *Ephraimites* carry it further, and with as little Reason. For assembling their Forces together, they came upon *Jephthah*, and demand why he fought the *Ammonites* without them? *Jephthah* very calmly expostulates the Matter with them, and casts the Blame wholly upon themselves, who refused to come to his Assistance when the *Ammonites* attack'd him. The unreasonable *Ephraimites* were so enraged at this just Reproach, that, having nothing to urge in Vindication of themselves, and depending on their Numbers, threatned to burn his House over his Head. *Jephthah* finding it to no Purpose to reason longer with them, musters what Force he could in so short Time, and being flush'd with the late Success, resolves to fight the *Ephraimites*; who had no Reason to despise them, by calling them Fugitives of *Ephraim*; for the *Gileadites* needed no Reproach to rouse or whet their Courage, especially under the Conduct of their valiant General *Jephthah*. The Armies join, and after a short but sharp Dispute the Fortune of the Battel declar'd for *Gilead*, *Ephraim* being forc'd to fly. *Jephthah* resolving to make sure Work, and prevent the *Ephraimites* from disturbing him quickly, secures all the Passes on the *Jordan*, which those *Ephraimites* that escap'd in the Fight, must of necessity pass, to get Home: So that as fast as any of them came thither, if upon Examination they own'd themselves *Ephraimites*, they were put to the Sword: If any denied, they gave them the Test, which was to pronounce the Word ^k SHIBBOLETH, which

consecrate it to the Lord, or I will offer it up for a Burnt-Offering, in Proportion to the Circumstance of the Person or Creature that first should meet him.

ⁱ Not the first. Tho' *Gideon* had called the *Ephraimites* to assist in the Pursuit of the *Midianites*, and had given them the Advantage of Plunder, and Honour of taking of *Oreb* and *Zeeb*, two Princes of

Midian, yet because they were not called at first to the Battel, they took upon them to reprehend *Gideon* very sharply for the Affront; which he like a prudent Man took patiently, and appeased them with good Words, extolling their Valour, and applauding their Success.

^k *Shibboleth*, which signifies a Stream, Water-Course, or Falling of Waters.

they

they could not do either thro' Fear or Infatuation, calling it *SIBBOLETH*, which small Variation cost them their Lives. In this Action and Pursuit there were slain two and forty thousand of the *Ephraimites*.

Jephthab having thus successfully rid himself both of his foreign and domestick Enemies, spent the rest of his Life in Peace, which lasted not long, for the whole Time of his Administration was but of six Years Continuance.

Jephthab is succeeded by *Ibzan* of *Bethlehem*, of whom there is nothing more recorded, than that he had thirty Sons and thirty Daughters, and that he reign'd seven Years. *Elon* a *Zebulonite* succeeded *Ibzan*, who governed *Israel* ten Years; and after him *Abdon* ruled eight: All that is said of this last is, that he had forty Sons, and thirty Grandsons. In these three Reigns *Israel* enjoy'd a Peace of three and twenty Years; in which Time growing wanton they laps'd into their former Sins; by which they provoked God to punish them, which he did, in delivering them into the Hands of the *Philistines*.

Samson, who was the last of those who are accounted extraordinary Judges of *Israel*, is suppos'd to have been born about the Time of ^m *Jephthab's* Victory. His Birth being attended with unusual Events and Circumstances, we will relate the Particulars. *Samson* was the Son of *Manoah* a ⁿ *Danite*, whose Wife having been long barren, the Angel of the Lord appeared to her when she was alone, and told her she should conceive and bear a Son, directing her how to manage and or-

¹ *Extraordinary*. That is, Judges or Deliverers raised up in an extraordinary manner. Others were raised at the Time when they were wanted: But *Samson* was promised for a Deliverer before he was born. Therefore because there were many extraordinary Things that happened, both leading to, and attending his Birth, it is very proper to trace his History from the Beginning.

^m *Jephthab's*. Allowing *Samson* to have been born at this Time, he must be at least thirty Years old at the Death of *Abdon*, his immediate Predecessor:

And when he took upon him the Administration.

ⁿ *Danite*. The Tribe of *Dan* bordering upon the *Philistines* was most exposed to their Incursions and Invasions, and therefore God out of that Tribe chose *Samson* for a Judge and Revenger. Which is very agreeable to the Prophecy of *Jacob* when he blessed his Sons a little before his Death. *Dan shall be a Serpent by the Way, an Adder by the Path, biting the Heels of the Horse, so that his Rider shall fall backwards.*

der herself whilst she was with Child, by forbearing Wine or strong Drink, and all unclean Meats; and that after she was delivered of him, she should not ^o shave his Head, for he should be a *Nazarite* unto God from his Birth, and should begin to deliver *Israel* from the Oppression of the *Philistines*. The Woman acquaints her Husband with this Interview between her and the Angel; and he being not so much surpriz'd as overjoy'd at the Hopes of having a Son, had the Curiosity to see this divine Messenger himself, his Pretence for it being to be further instructed in the Management of the Child when he should be born. God graciously answered his Request, and the Angel again appeared, repeating to the expecting Couple the former Instructions. The Angel appearing in human Shape, *Manoah* took him to be a Man of God, and pressed him to accept of an Entertainment. The Angel told him he would not, but advis'd him to express his Gratitude in a Burnt-Offering to the Lord, *Manoah* accordingly prepares a Kid and a Meat-Offering, and offered it upon a Rock unto God, and then the Angel in a wonderful Manner discovered himself, which before he refused to do at *Manoah's* Importunity; for when the Flame ascended from the Altar, the Angel ascended in it and disappear'd. Now poor *Manoah* begins too late, he fears, to repent his Curiosity, and both he and his Wife prostrate themselves on the Ground; but he looking upon himself and Wife as lost, cry'd out, *We shall surely die, because we have dar'd to see God.* But the good Woman arm'd with more Reason and Courage argues with her timorous desponding Hus-

^o *Shave*. Long Hair was esteemed very much among the *Jews*, and here *Samson's* Mother was forbid to cut his Hair, because he was to be a *Nazarite* unto the Lord, that is, dedicated to the Lord, the Sanctity of his Consecration consisting in his long and uncut Hair, which was a token not only of Beauty, but of Majesty and Veneration. As to the cutting off his

Hair after by *Dalilah*, it was done in a fraudulent Manner and with a hostile Intent, not only to deprive him of his Hair, but of his Strength, that so they might destroy him. Besides it may be said to be done in Judgment upon him for suffering himself to be deluded by an infidel Harlot,

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band, and tells him, That if the Lord had intended to destroy them he would not have accepted an Offering from them, nor condescended to communicate such a Blessing to them as he had promised.

According to the appointed Time the Woman was delivered of a Son, whom, from the Angel's appearing the second Time to her, she called *Samson*. By the Consequence it is reasonable to suppose, that *Samson's* Parents observ'd the Directions given by the Angel for his Nursing and Erudition; for whilst a Child, the Lord blessed him so that he grew to a wonderful Strength: And while he was but a Youth, the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at certain Times to exert himself in Actions of Strength and Activity, in the ¹old Camp of *Dan*, between *Zorah* and *Eshbatal*.

Samson being grown to Man's Estate, had a Mind to travel and see the Country; and coming to *Timnah*, a City belonging to the *Philistines*, he happen'd to cast his Eyes on a beautiful *Philistine*, who so captivated the young Hero, that he could not live without her. But in Duty to his Father and Mother, he would not marry without their Consent. The fond Parents expostulated

¹ Move him. This is an Hebrew Phrase, for it is often used upon particular Occasions, where God very signally appeared in the Action; but in none oftner than in the History of *Samson's* Administration: for upon every Emergency it is said, *The Spirit of the Lord came upon him*. Hence St. Ambrose observes on Luke i. 17. *He shall go before him in the Spirit and Power of Elias*; these two, the Spirit and Power (which is Fortitude) are always join'd together: For all Fortitude, whether in attempting or suffering, is from the Holy Ghost, that inspires us. Thus *John the Baptist* is said to have the Spirit and Power of Elias: And the Angel Gabriel said to the Blessed Virgin, *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the Power of the most High shall overshadow thee*. And our Blessed Lord tells his Apostles, *Acts* i. 8. *Ye shall receive the Power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you*. Whence we see Power is always attributed to the Holy Ghost; and therefore the Septuagint

very aptly in this Place turns it, *The Spirit of the Lord began to go along with him*. *Judg.* xiii. 25. That is, always inspired and stimulated him on to the Performance of godly and heroick Actions. *The Spirit of Fortitude was with him from the Lord to strengthen him*; saith the Chaldee Paraphrase.

¹ Old Camp. This Camp of *Dan* was probably that Place, where the *Danites* pitched their Camp in their Expedition and Enterprize against *Laiish*, *Judg.* xviii. 11. For it is not at all likely, that the *Philistines*, who had the *Israelites* at that Time under an intire Subjection, should suffer them to have any standing Camp. And, if the Reader looks back a little, this is another Argument, that the Story of *Micah*, and of the *Danites* Expedition, was transacted before *Samson's* Time, tho' by the Compilers of the Bible they are related after, as the Story of *Job* is.

with

with their Son the Unreasonableness of the Match, in offering to marry into an uncircumcised Family. But the amorous Youth consulting his Passion more than Religion, was so pressing in his Request to his Parents, that their Indulgence was not Proof against it; but to gratify him, they went with him to *Timnah* to see this Beauty, and treat with her Parents about the Marriage.

As they were on their Journey, *Samson* straggling from the Company, a young Lion came in a mighty Rage out of the Vineyards of *Timnah* and attack'd him. Upon which the ^r Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, so that he slew the Lion with as much Ease, as if it had been a Kid. After this Action he went on and overtook his Parents, but acquainted them not with this Adventure of the Lion. Being arriv'd at *Timnah*, the Match was soon concluded; and not long after *Samson* and his Parents take another Journey to solemnize the Nuptials; but in their Way to *Timnah*, *Samson* remembring the Place where he had incountred the Lion, his Curiosity led him to see what was become of the Carcase; when, to his great Surprize and Amazement, he found in it a Swarm of Bees, with some Honey: Of which taking some in his Hands, he went on eating, and when he overtook his Parents he gave them some of it, but did not tell them whence he had it.

Being arriv'd at *Timnah*, *Samson* entertain'd the Relations on both Sides for seven Days, and to grace the Nuptials the more, his Wife's Kindred brought thirty of their prime Youth to bear him Company. To these young Men, *Samson*, during the Wedding Feast, proposed a Riddle, which was this; "Out of the Eater
" came forth Meat, and out of the Strong came forth
" Sweetness." He gave them seven Days to expound the Riddle in, upon Condition that if they expounded it, he would give them thirty Garments, and as many Shirts; but if they did not, they should give him the

^r Spirit. See Note on the last Letter ^r of this Alphabet.

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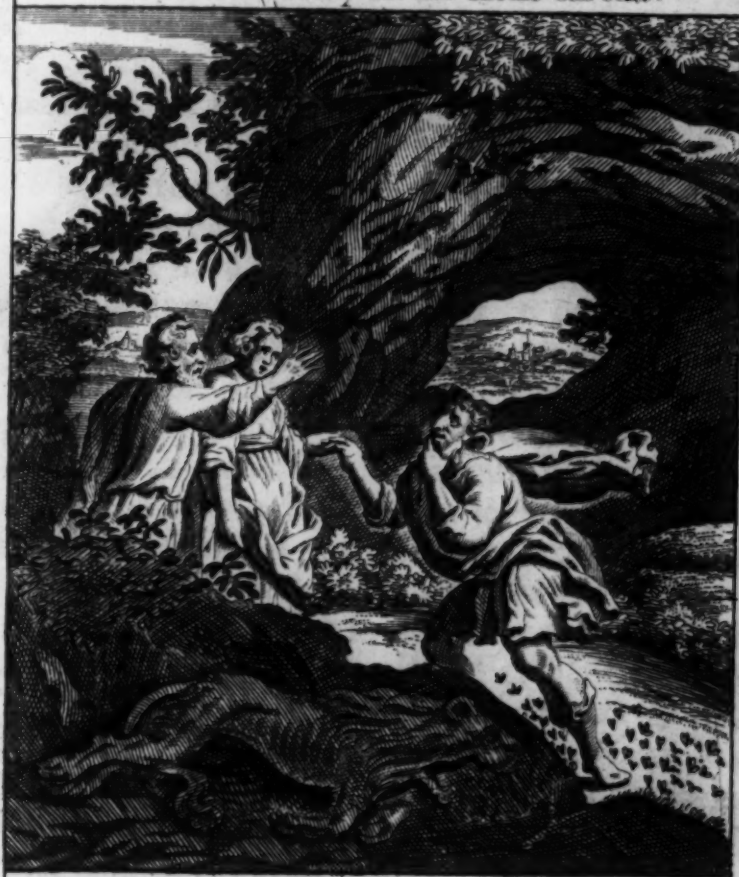
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JUDGES CHAP. XIV.

50

Samson finds honey in the lions carcass.



JUDGES 14. Verse 8.

And he turned aside to see the carcass of y^e lion, and behold, there was a swarm of bees, and honey in the carcass of the lion.

330.



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same Number. The young Men not knowing how to expound the Riddle, apply'd themselves to his Wife, and persuaded her to discover the Meaning of it. After much Importunity she prevailed upon her Husband, who was so weak as to trust her with it, and she immediately told it to those young Men, who came to *Samson* at the End of the seven Days, and said; "What is sweeter than Honey, and what is stronger than a Lion?" *Samson* was satisfied his Wife had discovered the Secret; for he knew he had told it to no body else; and therefore to let them know he was sensible of foul Play in the Matter, he with Indignation reply'd; "If you had not ploughed with my Heifer, you could not have expounded my Riddle." Then yielding his Wager lost, he prepares to pay it; and going to *Ascalon*, a City of the *Philistines*, he slew thirty Men, whose Garments he gave to those that had expounded the Riddle. Being incens'd against the *Philistines* for this unfair Dealing about the Riddle, he left *Timnah* and return'd to his Father's House. But tho' he had entertain'd a just Resentment against the *Philistines*, yet he retain'd a Fondness for his Wife, to whose Weakness he did not so much impute the Discovery of the Riddle, as to the Fraud of her Countrymen. Some Time after he return'd to *Timnah* to visit his Wife, and as a Token of his Affection he brought a Kid with him for a Present; and preparing to go to Bed to her, her Father would not permit him, urging for Excuse, that he thought he slighted her, and therefore had given her in Marriage to one of his 'Companions; but if he pleas'd, her younger Sister, who was more beautiful, was at his Service.

This was an additional Provocation, for which *Samson* intends a sharp Revenge, and which he executed thus. He found Means to catch three hundred

^r *Companions.* I suppose to one of the thirty, that they had provided to bear him Company at the Wedding; and, it is very probable, as a Reward of the Treachery in discovering the Secret of the Riddle.

*Foxes, which he tied two and two together by the Tails, with lighted Torches to them, and drove the Foxes into the standing Corn, by which Means he burnt not only the Corn, but the Vineyards and Olive-Trees. The *Philistines* understanding it was *Samson*, Son-in-law to the *Timnite* that had done this Mischief, because his Father-in-law had taken away his Wife, came in Revenge to *Timnah* and burnt *Samson's* Wife and her Father. This gave *Samson* fresh Occasion of quarrelling with the *Philistines* again, and he was so far from concealing his Resentment, or using any Stratagem to be reveng'd on them, that he openly declar'd he would have Satisfaction; which he forthwith did in a great Slaughter of them.

After this Action, *Samson* well knowing he had provok'd the *Philistines* to the highest Degree, for better Security took up his Residence in the Top of the Rock *Etam*: Which when the *Philistines* understood, they march'd into *Judah* and incamped there, demanding *Samson* of the Inhabitants, that they might have Satisfaction of him for the Wrong he had done them. The Men of *Judah* dreading the Consequence of this Invasion, immediately detach three thousand Men of

* *Foxes*. The catching of so many Foxes (which are a very cunning wary Creature) is very ludicrously question'd by some. But if they would consider, that what *Samson* did in this Case was by divine Inspiration, and that in every other great Action of his, The Spirit of God is said to come mightily upon him, their Mouths might be stop'd. For we may reasonably suppose, that God by his Angel seconding the Acts of *Samson*, these Foxes might be disposed and got together, that they might easily be taken by him; as God directed all Creatures to come to *Noah* before the Flood, to be preserved by him in the Ark. But it is plain from Scripture, that *Judea*, and especially that part of it which was the Portion of the Tribe of *Dan*, (to which *Samson* belonged) abounded with Foxes; for the *Septuagint* render *Judg.* i. 35. *Salebim*, in which are Foxes, but Foxes are left out in our Translation. And yet as

incredulous as some would seem to be in Transactions mentioned in Holy Scriptures, they readily credit the almost incredible Accounts of profane Authors. *Julius Caesar* is said to have produc'd at one Shew four hundred Lions. *Probus* the Emperor a thousand Leopards, a thousand Stags, a thousand Bears, &c. *Heligabaldus* a thousand Weefels, &c. as *Lampridius* and *Vopiscus* testify in the Lives of them, and *Pliny*, l. 8. c. 16. How strange is it then, that *Samson's* getting three hundred Foxes together should seem so extravagant to any one? But besides the Satisfaction *Samson* might take in expressing his Resentment thus on the *Philistines*, he may reasonably be thought to have another End in it; for by catching so many Foxes he secur'd the Vineyards of his own People from these mischievous Creatures, so that this Injury to the *Philistines* was a Benefit to himself.

their

their Tribe to go and take *Samson*, telling him, "Didst thou not know, that we were subject to the *Philistines*; why then hast thou provok'd them so much?" Adding, that they were come to seize and deliver him to the *Philistines*. *Samson* knew his own Strength, but would not use it against his Countrymen; only obliging them by Oath not to side with the *Philistines* against him, he gave them Leave to bind him; upon which they brought him to the Place where the *Philistines* lay incamp'd; who seeing him brought bound, thought they had him secure now, and went out shouting for Joy to receive him. But before they could lay Hands on him, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him so powerfully, that he broke the Cords from his Arms with as much Ease as if they had been burnt Flax; and looking about him for a Weapon, he could find no better than a Jaw-bone of an Ass; however, being inspir'd, he with that dispatch'd a thousand of the *Philistines*. The Heat of this Action made him so excessively thirsty, that he was ready to faint, and being in a Place where there was no Water to be had, he address'd himself to the Lord thus; "Thou hast given this great Deliverance into the Hand of thy Servant; and shall I die with Thirst and fall into the Hands of the Uncircumcised?" God heard his Complaint, and that this miraculous Victory gain'd by the Hand of one Man, and so poorly arm'd as with nothing but the Jaw-bone of an Ass, might not be unattended, he as miraculously gratifies the Champion's Thirst; by a Supply of Water from a Rock, which never before produc'd any Moisture; he clave a hollow Rock called *Maïes* which was at *Lehi*, and Water plen-

^a Rock. *Vatablus*, *Junius* and *Tremellius* have remarked, that all the Versions, except the *Caldee* Paraphrase, have transformed the Place where *Samson* killed the thousand *Philistines*, which is called *Lehi*, into a Jaw-bone; and a hollow Rock which was in that Place into a hollow Tooth, which was in the Jaw-bone: *Judg.* xv. 19. translating. God clave a hollow Place, which was in the Jaw;

and there came Water thereout; whereas they should have translated, God clave a hollow Rock called *Maïes*, which was at *Lehi*, &c. The same Rock *Maïes* is mention'd in *Zephaniah* i. 11. where our Translation renders it the low Place. It was called *Maïes*, because it had the Figure of a Mortar; the *Chaldee* Paraphrase says, that it was situated near the Brook *Kedron*, or near *Tiberias*, according

plentifully flowed from it; of which *Samson* having drank, his Spirit came, and he revived.

Samson's next Exploit was at *Gaza*, another City of the *Philistines*, whither, invited by Curiosity, or Desire of the *Philistine* Women, he went, and took up his Lodging at a House of publick Entertainment. He was not long conceal'd here; for the Inhabitants of the Place having Notice of him, beset the House, and watching for him all Night at the Gate of the City, concluded they should have him in the Morning, and then they would dispatch him. *Samson* being inform'd of their Design upon him, lay still till Midnight; and then rising, took the Gates of the City, with the two Posts and Bars, and laying them on his Shoulders, carried them to the Top of a Hill which looks towards *Hebron*; and so escaped the Danger that threatned him. But a more fatal Danger than this soon after beset him: For falling in Love with a beautiful Woman that liv'd in the Vale of *Sorek*, whose Name was *Dalilah*, he was so captivated with her Charms, that he had little Regard to his own Safety. The Princes of the *Philistines* observing *Samson's* Fondness, take Advantage of it, and addressing themselves to *Dalilah*, promise to give her each of them ^w eleven hundred Shekels of Silver, if she could intice him to discover to her wherein his great Strength lay, that so they might bind and punish him for the great Mischief he had done them. So great a Bribe easily prevail'd with the Woman to betray her Lover; who after much Sollicitation and Importunity told her, that he

ing to the Allegorical Comments of the *Jews*. Nor did *Josephus* the Historian understand this Text otherwise, when he remarks, *Antiq. l. 7. c. 10.* "That God, having heard the Prayer of *Samson*, made a Fountain to spring in a Rock, which did send out abundance of sweet and clear Water." And those that have travell'd through *Palestine*, do assure us, that this Fountain remains to this Day. *St. Jerome* tells us, he saw it; and *Michael Glycas*, who lived about the Year 1120, says, That it was to be seen

at that Time in the Suburbs of *Eleutheropolis*, and that it was called *The Fountain of the Jaw*.

^w *Eleven, &c.* The Number of these Princes of the *Philistines* is suppos'd to be five, from the five chief Cities, viz. *Accaron, Ascalon, Axoth, Gaza, and Gath*, 1 Sam. vi. 17. So that five times eleven hundred, or five thousand five hundred Shekels of Silver, each in Value fifteen Pence, would amount to about three hundred forty-three Pounds and fifteen Shillings.

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JUDGES CHAP. XVI.

51

Samson carries away the gates of Gaza.



JUDGES 16. Verse 3.

*And Samson lay till midnight, and
arose at midnight, and took the doors
of the gate of the city. etc.*

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had been a *Nazarite* to God from his Birth, and that no Razor ever yet came upon his Head; but if he should be shaven, his Strength would be no more than that of a common Man. *Dalilah* having thus extorted the great Secret from him, sent for the Princes of the *Philistines* to come to her, assuring them that he had now discovered the whole Secret of his Strength to her. They accordingly come and bring the Money they had promised her; and she having lulled him to Sleep, as his Head lay on her Lap, a Man, whom she had provided, shaved off the seven Locks of his Head; then rousing him, she said, "The *Philistines* be upon thee *Samson*." He not knowing what was done, thought to stretch himself, as he us'd to do, for as yet he knew not that the Lord was departed from him; but he too soon discovered it by the Loss of his Strength. The *Philistines* seeing him now really disabled, seized him immediately, and to make sure of him, they put out his Eyes, and bringing him to *Gaza*, they fetter'd him, and made him work in the Prison.

Some Time after the *Philistines* kept a Day of Rejoycing for the taking of their greatest Enemy, and offer'd Sacrifice to their God * *Dagon*. When they had feasted a while, and were grown merry, they called for *Samson* to make Sport; upon which he was brought from the Prison, and being placed between the two Pillars that supported the Roof, they made themselves Sport with him. Besides the great Conflux of People of all Sorts that were in the House of *Dagon* at this Solemnity, there were about three thousand on the Roof, that came to be Spectators of *Samson's* Misery. By this Time his Hair was somewhat grown; and it is probable his Strength might begin to return: However, whether it did or not in that Manner, it is very likely these Indignities offered him by the *Philistines* provok'd him to the

* *Dagon*. This *Dagon* was the common God of the Sea-Coasts, having the Form of a Man from the Navel upwards and downwards of a Fish; from which the Word is derived.

highest Degree; wherefore persuading the Lad that guided him, to set him so that he might feel both the Pillars on which the House stood, on Pretence of leaning on them to rest himself, he with great Earnestness prayed to God to strengthen him but this one Time, that he might be revenged of the *Philistines* for the Loss of his Eyes. God heard his Prayers, and gave him such a wonderful Accession of Strength, that taking hold of the two Pillars with both his Hands, he bowed himself with all his Might, and at the same Time saying, "Let me die with the *Philistines*;" he exerted his Strength in such a Manner, that forcing the Pillars from their Bases, the House fell down upon all that were in it. So that *Samson* had a full Revenge on his Enemies, and put an End to his miserable Condition; slaying more at his Death, than in the Height of his Strength. Thus died *Samson*, who is said to have judged *Israel* twenty Years; and was rather a Scourge to the *Philistines*, than a Deliverer of the *Israelites*. Yet he may be said to have begun to deliver *Israel* in this last Action, tho' it cost him his Life. When his Relations heard of his Death, they came and brought him to his Father's Sepulchre between *Zorah* and *Eshtaol*, where they buried him.

After the Death of *Samson* the Administration of the Government of *Israel* seems to have devolved upon *Eli*, who was then High-Priest. In the Beginning of his Reign was born *Samuel* the Prophet, the Son of *Elkanah*, a *Levite* descended from *Korah*. He lived in the City of *Ramah*, which belonged to the Tribe of *Ephraim*, with his two Wives *Hannah* and *Peninnah*. The latter of which had Children, but the first none. *Elkanah* according to the Custom once a Year went up to *Shiloh* to worship and sacrifice to the Lord, taking his two Wives and his Children with him; where

† *Levite* descended, &c. *Elkanah* was descended from that *Korah*, who in *Moses's* Time, for his Rebellion in the Wilderness, was swallowed up by the gaping Earth, and all that he had with him,

Numb. xvi. except his Son, *Numb.* xxvi. 11. from the eldest of which, named *Assir*, the Genealogy is drawn down to *Samuel*, in *1 Chron.* vi. from ver. 22, to 28.

after he had made his Offerings, he gave Presents to both his Wives; but *Hannab* being his best beloved, he gave her a double Share of his Favour. This bred ill Blood between the two Wives, and *Peninnab* priding her self in her Children, reproach'd *Hannab* for her Sterility. Her Husband endeavours to comfort her; but *Hannab* seeks for it from a more powerful Hand, addressing her self earnestly in Prayer to the Lord, and vowing at the same Time, that if he would bless her with a Son, she would dedicate him to the Lord all the Days of his Life, and that no Razor should come upon his Head. *Eli* the Priest, who was near her, seeing her Lips move, but not hearing her speak, suppos'd she was intoxicated with Wine, and chid her for it; but finding himself mistaken, he turned his Reproof into a Blessing, praying to God to hear her Petition. Being return'd to *Ramah*, she conceiv'd, and was in due Time deliver'd of a Son, whom she named *Samuel*, because she had asked him of God; which his Name implies.

Hannab having weaned her little Son, according to her Promise brought him to the House of the Lord at *Shiloh* with an Offering, acquainting *Eli*, that she was the Woman, that some Time since had prayed to the Lord for a Child, and that she came to perform her Vow, which was to dedicate him to the Service of the Lord. *Eli* at this gave Thanks to the Lord, for having heard and answered *Hannab's* Prayer, and *Hannab* in a Holy Rapsody did the same. *Elkanah* and *Hannab* having perform'd their Vow, prepare to return, and *Eli* pronouncing a Blessing upon them said, "The Lord give thee the Seed of this Woman, for the Loan which is lent to the Lord," meaning *Samuel*; whom they left behind them with *Eli*, who put on him a Linen Ephod, and he served in the House of the Lord as *Eli* had directed him. After that, once a Year, till he grew up, his Mother, when she came up to offer the yearly Sacrifice, made him a little Coat, and brought it to him.

Eli the Priest had two Sons, but very wicked ones; for valuing themselves upon the Authority and Dignity of the Priesthood, they domineer'd over the Men, and debauch'd the Women. And to such an Insolence were they grown, that not content with the Portion of the Flesh of the Sacrifice, which God had assign'd them, they would seize what they liked best, and at what Time they pleased. By these Means the Service of God grew contemptible in the Eyes of the People; who were indifferent whether they offered or not. But how heinous soever the Sins of the Priests might be, they did not excuse the People from Guilt in neglecting the Service of the Lord.

Eli himself had often heard of the Wickedness of his Sons, yet did not restrain or punish them as he, that was both their Father and Magistrate, ought to have done, giving them only a slight Reproof, which was so far from dissuading, that they still persisted in their wicked Practices. At last a ² Man of God came to *Eli* with a Message that threatned him and his Household with Ruin for his careless mild Administration: First upbraiding him with Ingratitude for slighting the Honour done his Family in investing the Priesthood in it; threatening his Sons *Hophni* and *Phineas* with Death, which he foretells shall happen at one and the same Time. And to shew *Eli* the wretched Poverty that his Posterity should fall into, he added, That every one that should be left in his House, should come and crouch to a more faithful Priest, whom the Lord would set up, for a Piece of Silver and a Morsel of Bread; and shall say, "Put me, I pray thee, into one of the Priest's Office, that I may have a Piece of Bread to eat."

² Man of God. Who this Man of God was, that brought this unwelcome Message to *Eli*, is very uncertain. *Tremellius* and *Junius* in their Notes upon the Place take him to be *Samuel*. Which is very strange, and very unlikely to be true, for *Samuel* was then too young, and in the third of the first of *Samuel*, he is set forth as one not yet acquainted with the Voice of God; and also that the Lord,

when he had spoken to *Samuel*, tells him as a Thing he knew not before, that he had denounced a Judgment against *Eli* and his House. It is certain, that it was a very dark Time: There was no open Vision, no certain known Prophet, such as *Moses* had been before, and as *Samuel*, *Nathan*, *Elijah*, and others were afterwards.

Soon

Soon after this the Lord gives old *Eli* another Denunciation of his Judgments by a younger Hand. *Samuel* being lodg'd in the further Part of the Tabernacle among the *Levites*, the Lord in the Night called him by his Name; who, as the Manner was, answered; Here am I; and starting up, ran to *Eli's* Apartment, supposing he had called him: But when *Eli* told him he had not called him, he went and lay down again. This was repeated three Times, and *Samuel* began at last to be positive with *Eli*, that he did call him. This roused *Eli*, and made him think there was something extraordinary in it, which Thought he communicated to *Samuel*, bidding him go to Bed again, and directed him, that if the Lord should call him again, he should say, "Speak Lord; for thy Servant heareth." As *Eli* expected so it happened; and *Samuel* did as he directed him. Then said the Lord to *Samuel*, "All that I have spoken concerning *Eli* and his House I will perform; for I have told him, that I will judge his House for ever, for the Iniquity to which he is privy: Because his Sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them: Therefore I have sworn unto the House of *Eli*, that the Iniquity of *Eli's* House shall not be purged with Sacrifice, nor Offering for ever."

This Sentence was so terrible even to *Samuel*, that had no Share in it, that he was afraid to tell it *Eli*; but *Eli* now thoroughly awakened, by the Message he had received before, and the Apprehension he now had, that the Lord had revealed something like it to *Samuel*, obliged him to tell him what the Lord had said to him. *Samuel* obeys, and tells him the very worst. To which poor *Eli* humbly submitted, saying; "It is the Lord, let him do what he pleaseth."

And now to the great Comfort of *Israel* God was pleased to appear again in *Shiloh*, revealing himself to *Samuel* there. For as *Samuel* grew up, both in Stature as a Man, and in Grace as a Man of God, the Lord was with him, and accomplished whatsoever he spoke by

him; so that all *Israel* knew, from one End of the Land to the other, that *Samuel* was a faithful Prophet to the Lord.

The *Israelites* being again blest'd with a Prophet, promised to themselves great Things, concluding all that they undertook would succeed; and therefore being animated with this Thought, they had a Mind to try, if they could not shake off the *Philistine* Yoke. Wherefore intending to fight them, they incamped in a Place, which was afterwards upon better Success called *Eben-Ezer*. The *Philistines* sat down by *Aphek*, a City of *Judah*, and in a short Time the Armies join'd; but the *Israelites*, instead of Victory, find the Judgments of God denounced against Priest and People ready to fall on them; for in the Action they lost four thousand of their Men. The rest making an orderly Retreat to their Camp, the Elders began to consider what might be the Cause of this Defeat; and fondly supposing it to be for want of having the Ark with them, they resolve for the future to carry it with them in all their other Expeditions. Then they sent Messengers to *Shiloh* for *Hophni* and *Phineas* the Priests to bring the Ark into the Camp. Which they forthwith did; and when the *Israelites* saw the Ark brought into the Camp, they gave such a Shout, as made the Earth ring: Which so disheartened the *Philistines*, that they were at the Brink of Despair, especially when they heard the true Cause of this rejoicing.

The *Israelites* on the other Hand were as fool-hardy, as the *Philistines* were dejected. For concluding themselves secure under the Protection due to the Ark, and not in the least questioning Success, they again offer the *Philistines* Battel; who ingaging, slew thirty thousand of their Foot, among which were *Hophni* and *Phineas*, put the rest to flight, and, which was the terriblest Blow of all, took the Ark of God. One of the Soldiers, of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, seeing the Day lost, made his Escape from the Field of Battel, and came running to *Shiloh* with his Clothes rent, and Earth upon his Head;

which in those Countries were Emblems of extreme Sorrow for the greatest Losses and Misfortunes.

* Tho' *Eli* had disobliged the Lord highly in his remiss and careless Administration, yet he had a religious Concern for the Safety of *Israel*, and more particularly for the Ark of God. Upon this Account therefore he went and sat at the Gate to hear (for he could not see) how Affairs went: Whilst he was sitting here, the foresaid *Benjamite* that escaped in the Fight having told the Citizens how things went, there was a mighty Outcry among them. Whereupon *Eli* asking what was the Meaning of that Tumult, the *Benjamite* Soldier was brought to him, who told him the *Israelites* were routed, his Sons in the Number of the Slain, and the Ark of the Lord taken. *Eli* kept his Seat till the last Piece of News was told him, but then his Spirits failing, he fell from his Seat backwards; and being heavy as well as old, his Neck broke with the Fall, and he died, having judged *Israel* forty Years. His Son *Phineas* had a Wife at this Time, who being big with Child, and near her Time, hearing of the Death of her Father and her Husband, and the Loss of the Ark, fell in Labour; and being deliver'd of a Son, with her dying Breath she named him *Ichabod*; which signifies, No Glory, adding as the Reason of giving the Child this Name, *That the Glory is departed from Israel*; which she meant by the taking of the Ark of God.

The *Philistines* having clear'd the Field, and carried off the Plunder, brought the Ark to *Ashdod*, and plac'd it in the Temple of *Dagon* near to the Idol; whom the next Morning they found fallen down upon his Face before the Ark of the Lord. They set him in his Place, and next Day come in again, and not only found him fallen to the Ground, but his Head and Palms of his Hands broken off, and lying on the Threshold, only his lower Part was left intire. Whence a superstitious Custom arose amongst the *Philistines*, that neither Priests nor People would tread upon the Threshold.

And now to let these Idolaters see, that the Cause is no longer between the *Philistines* and the *Israelites*, but between God and *Dagon*; the Lord lays his heavy Judgments on *Ashdod*, and all the Coast Towns thereabouts, afflicting the People with the Piles, and destroying at the same Time the Country with Mice. The People of *Ashdod* were sensible this was a Judgment from the God of *Israel* for taking and detaining the Ark; therefore consulting what to do, the Princes of the *Philistines*, partly to redress the Complaints of the *Ashdodites*, but chiefly to carry the Ark about in Triumph, send it to *Gath*, where the same Judgments pursue the Detainers of it. Whereupon they remove it to *Ekron*, but the Inhabitants no sooner see it, but they cry out, "They have brought about the Ark of the God of *Israel* to us, to slay us and our People.

Whilst the Ark was here, not only the Piles, but a deadly Plague attended the People; wherefore calling the Priests, they resolved to send the Ark away, but could not presently agree upon the manner of doing it. The Priests advise them not to send it away empty, but to prepare a Trespass-Offering for Atonement of their Sacrilege, which was to consist of five golden Emrods, and five golden Mice, according to the Number of the Princes of the *Philistines*; hoping, that by thus acknowledging the Glory of the Lord of *Israel*, he would rid them of the Plagues he had inflicted on them: for why, said the Priests, should you be obstinate, as the *Egyptians* were, to your own Destruction? Then directing them to provide a new Cart, and two Milch-Kine, that never had been yok'd, and fasten them to the Cart, without their Calves, they bid them lay the Ark on the Cart, and put the golden Emrods and Mice in a Coffer by the Side of the Ark, and send them away: But caution'd them strictly to observe which Way the Cart went; for if it went by the Way of *Bethshemeth*, they might conclude, that it was the God of *Israel* that had plagued them; but if it went not that Way, they

they should look upon all these Judgments only as common Accidents.

The *Philistines* sending the Ark away in this Manner, the Kine that drew it went on lowing directly to *Bethshemeth*; the five Princes of the *Philistines* follow'd at a Distance to see what would become of it, who, when they saw it arrive safely at *Bethshemeth*, return'd to *Ekron*. The *Bethshemites*, who were reaping in the Valley, seeing the Ark, were over-joy'd. The Kine having drawn the Cart into the Field of *Joshua* the *Bethshemite*, stood still there by a great Stone, called the Stone of *Abel*; which the ^a *Levites* seeing, they took down the Ark of the Lord, and the Coffer that was with it, and laid them upon the great Stone. Then cleaving the Wood of the Cart to make a Fire with, they offer'd the Kine for a Burnt-Offering to the Lord. But some of the *Bethshemites*, whether moved by Joy or Curiosity, took the Liberty of looking into the Ark, ^b contrary to the Law; for which the Lord slew ^c seventy of them, which so terrified the rest, that they cried out, "Who is able to stand before this Holy Lord God? And to whom shall he go from us?" This made them de-

^a *Levites*. *Bethshemeth* was a City, which belonged to the *Levites*. See *Josh.* xxi. 16.

^b *Contrary*. See *Numb.* iv. 40.

^c *Seventy*, &c. *Cornelius a Lap.* very learnedly at first determines the Number of the People slain for this profane Curiosity to be but seventy, following therein the Opinion of *St. Jerom*, *Josephus*, and the *Hebrews*, That God smote seventy of the fifty thousand *Bethshemites*. But afterwards, inclining too much to the *Septuagint* and the *Chaldee Paraphrase*, will have them amount to fifty thousand and seventy Men that were slain; but with little Reason in my Opinion. But let us take the Judgment of others: The learned *Bochart* could not without Horror read what the Versions make the Scripture say, *1 Sam. vi. 19.* That God smote fifty thousand and threescore and ten Men of the Inhabitants of *Bethshemeth*, because they had looked into the Ark: For he could not imagine that God, who is

Goodness it self, could have made such a Slaughter of those who had received the Ark with Joy at its Return, and offered several Sacrifices to God on that Account. Besides, he could not conceive that there could have been such a Multitude of People in a Village on the Borders of *Judea*. These Considerations inclined them to believe the Opinion of *Josephus*, who says, That God only smote seventy Men; and he proves that the Text says no other thing, and that it should be translated, *And he smote threescore and ten Men of the People of Bethshemeth, viz. fifty Men of a thousand, which answers exactly to the Hebrew.* And he shews that it is not usual in the *Hebrew Tongue* to make thousands to go before inferior Numbers to make up a total Sum; but that they constantly begin with the less Number, and end with the greater, as *St. Jerom* has likewise observed in speaking of *Daniel's* seventy Weeks.

firous of removing the Ark, and send to *Kirjath-jearim*, to acquaint them that the *Philistines* had sent back the Ark of the Lord, and desire them to come and fetch it. Accordingly they come, and convey the Ark to the House of *Abinadab* on the Hill, whose Son *Eleazer* was consecrated to keep it, where it abode twenty Years.

Samuel, having upon the Death of *Eli* and Loss of the Ark, taken upon him the Administration, govern'd *Israel* at the End of twenty Years, finding in the People a good Disposition to repent, and return to the Lord, exhorted them to put away the strange Gods *Baal* and *Asheroth*, and only to serve the Lord; promising, that if they would do so, they should be delivered from the *Philistines*. Then ordering all *Israel* to meet him at *Mizpeh*, they came to him there: Where whilst they humbled themselves with Prayer and Fasting, the *Philistines* having Notice of this general Meeting came in Arms, and put them into a great Consternation. The *Israelites* thus frightened, begged of *Samuel* to intercede for them to the Lord. *Samuel* thereupon took a sucking Lamb, offered it whole for a Burnt-Offering, and prayed to the Lord for *Israel*. Whose Prayers were so effectual, that the *Philistines* coming to attack *Israel* at that same Instant, the Lord sent down such a Peal of Thunder on the *Philistines*, just as they were ready to ingage, that the *Israelites* taking the Advantage of their Disorder gain'd a mighty Victory, and pursued them from *Mizpeh* beyond *Beschor*. From which Time the *Philistines* came not into the Country of the *Israelites*, who recovered the Towns those People had taken from them from *Ekron* to *Gath*. And *Samuel* in Memory of this great Deliverance set up a Monumental Stone between *Mizpeh* and *Shen*, calling it *Eben-Ezer*, that is, the Stone of Help.

After this, *Samuel*, for the better Administration of Justice, took a Circuit through *Bethel*, *Gilgal*, and *Mizpeh*, returning every Year to *Ramah*: But growing in Years, and unable to travel, he constituted his two Sons,

Joel

Joel and *Abiah*, Judges over *Israel*; who degenerating from their good Father were corrupted with Bribes, and acted unjustly. Whereupon the Elders of *Israel* assembling, went in a Body to *Ramah*, and complained to *Samuel*. Their Cause of Complaint was just; but when they took upon them to go further, and dictate to *Samuel* how to redress it, they forfeited his Love and God's Care. They would not only have their Grievances redress'd, but have the Form of their Government alter'd, insisting upon *Samuel's* Inability to govern them by Reason of his great Age, as much as upon the Injustice of his Sons. And seeing other Nations were govern'd by Kings, nothing would please them but they must have a King. This insolent Demand was displeasing to *Samuel*, who finding he could not dissuade them, consulted the Lord; who order'd him to give them a King, as they desired, but reproach'd them for their Ingratitude to him and *Samuel* both: And to warn them of the dangerous Consequences of rejecting him and *Samuel* for a King, he gives him Instructions to lay before them what they were to expect from this wanton fickle Temper; That he should enslave them and their Children, by making them subject to all vile Offices; that they should be always in Arms and Tumults, liable to the Inconveniencies of a constant War, and attended with heavy Taxes; and that then they would cry to the Lord, but he would not hear them.

Notwithstanding this Caution which *Samuel* expressly delivered to the People, they persisted in their^d Resolution,

^d Resolution. It is supposed by some, that what made them so urgent at this Time for a King was a present Straight they thought themselves in for want of an able Leader: For *Nabash*, the King of the *Amorites*, coming up to *Jabesh-Gilead*, and incamping before it, had put the Men of *Jabesh* into such a Fright, that without more to do they offered to surrender upon Terms, telling him, *They would become Subjects to him, if he would make a League with them*, 1 Sam. xi. 1,

But the haughty *Amorites*, in Contempt of *Israel*, let them know, that if he made a League with them, the Condition thereof should be, *That they should come out to him, and let him thrust out all their Right Eyes, and lay it for a Reproach upon all Israel*. The Elders of *Jabesh* in this sad Circumstance demanded seven Days Respite, that they might send Messengers into all the Coasts of *Israel*; and if in that Time no Succours arrived, they would submit. This, it is thought, made the

lution, positively saying, "We will have a King over us, that we may be like other Nations, and that our King may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our Battels." *Samuel* seeing them so resolute, again consulted the Lord about it, who bid him answer their Desire, and make them a King. Upon this *Samuel* dismissed the Elders of *Israel* to their Cities; and since the setting up of a King at that Time was but to gratify the Humour of a fickle People, God fitted them with a Man extraordinary in his Person, being taller by the Head and Shoulders than any of the People. This was *Saul*, the Son of *Kish*, of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, a handsome Youth. *Kish's* Asses being gone astray, he sent his Son *Saul* with a Servant to seek them; who after much wandering about came to the Town of *Ramah-Zophim*, *Samuel's* Residence, without hearing any News of what they sought for. Here *Saul's* Servant said to him, "There is a Seer in this Town who may tell us where the Asses are." *Saul* approves what his Servant proposed, and went into the Town inquiring for the Seer. God had the Day before given *Samuel* Notice of *Saul's* coming, and declared to him he was the Person whom he had chosen to be King. *Saul* meeting there with *Samuel*, who was going up to a High Place to offer Sacrifice, asked him where was the House of the Seer? *Samuel* understanding again that he was the Person God had appointed to be King, answered, "I am the Seer: Go up with me to this High Place: You shall dine with me to-day, and I will dismiss you to-morrow. As for the Asses which were lost three Days ago, be not in Pain for them, they are found again." Then he assured him, that all the best Things in *Israel* should be his: And bringing him Home with him, he invited

the Elders of *Israel* press so hard at that time upon *Samuel* for a King: Whereas they should have inquired of the Lord (as formerly they did) whom he on that Occasion would appoint for that time to be their General, to lead out their Forces

against their Enemy. But they, as it seems, had a mind to be more independent of God.

* *Seer*. So the Prophets were called in those Days.

thirty

thirty Persons to bear him Company, seating *Saul* and his Servant at his Table, but placing *Saul* above all the other Guests, and distinguishing him besides by setting before him the best of the Meat.

After they had eaten, *Samuel*, taking *Saul* to the Top of the House, had further Communication with him there that Evening; and early in the Morning calling him up, that he might dismiss him, they went out together; and as they were going down towards the End of the City, *Samuel* bid *Saul* order his Servant to go ^f before, but stand still himself for a While, that he might shew him what God had said concerning him. The Servant being gone out of Sight, *Samuel* taking a Vial of ^g Oil, poured it upon the Head of *Saul*, and ^h kissed him; adding that he did this because the Lord had appointed him to be a Prince over his Inheritance. Then as a Token that what he had told him was true, he foretold several Particulars which should happen to him in his Return; That near *Rachel's* Tomb he would meet two Men, who should inform him that his Father's Asses were found again; that departing thence, he should meet three Men going to *Bethel*, one of them carrying three Kids, the second three Cakes of Bread, and the third a Bottle of Wine, and that they should give him two Parts thereof: And lastly, that when he came to the Mountain of God, where was a Garrison of the *Philistines*, he should meet a Company of Prophets going into the City, where the Spirit

^f Before. This was with Design to let *Saul* understand, that what *Samuel* was about to do was by Divine Appointment; and that when they should come to cast Lots among all the Tribes, as they after did, 1 *Sam.* x. 20, &c. *Saul* might not think he was chosen King by the Chance of a Lot. Besides, there may be another Reason for *Samuel's* bidding *Saul* to send away his Servant, viz. lest the People suspecting *Samuel* to do this by his own Will more than the Appointment of God, should mutiny. Therefore it was necessary that this should not be published till *Saul* was convinced that he was chosen by God himself.

^g Oil. *Saul* was the first King of *Israel* that was anointed, though Unction was in Use before, as we may see in *Judges* ix. 8.

^h Kissed. This signified a Communication of Grace and a mutual Concord between the Regal and Sacerdotal Offices, a Kiss being an Emblem of Friendship and Peace. *Mariana* will have it to be a Token of Subjection and Homage; but in this Case (however it may be in others) it could not be so in *Samuel* towards *Saul*; for *Samuel* was Prince and Prophet, and this Act rather seems to make *Saul* his Equal than his Superior.

of

of God should fall upon him, and he should prophesy amongst them. After this he ordered *Saul* to go to *Gilgal*, where in seven Days he might expect him, because there *Samuel* intended to offer a Peace-Offering. All which Signs that *Samuel* had foretold, *Saul* found to happen exactly.

And now, though *Samuel* had thus privately anointed *Saul*, which no body knew but themselves, yet for the general Satisfaction of the People, and that the Choice and Inauguration of the King might be more publick and solemn, *Samuel* called them before the Lord at *Mizpeh*; to which Place the Ark of the Lord was brought, that the Choice might be openly made, and declared by casting Lots among all the Tribes of *Israel*, to know from which of them the King was to be chosen. The Lot fell on the Tribe of *Benjamin*; and casting the Lot again among the Families of *Benjamin*, the Lot fell upon the Family of *Matri*, and at last on *Saul*, the Son of *Kish*. *Saul* being before assured that the Choice would fall on him, was not present at the casting the Lot; but the People inquiring of the Lord whether they should fetch him or not, he not only consented, but expressly directed them where to find him. Accordingly they went for him; and having brought him, they set him among them, where he appeared taller than all the People from the Shoulders upwards; which *Samuel* observing, said to them, "Behold him whom the Lord hath chosen; there is none like him among all the People!" At which Words the People gave a general Shout, saying, "God save the King." Then *Samuel* told them the Duty of a King, and the Manner of the Kingdom, writing it in a Book, and laid it up before the Lord. Which done, he dismissed the People, and *Saul* went home to *Gibeah*, attended with a particular Company of Men, whom God had inclined to wait on him. But there were some that were not pleased with the Choice, though

¹Some. These are called Sons of *Belial*, 1 Sam. x. 27. that is, Men of a rebellious, proud, disobedient Spirit: Who tho they had desired a King, yet now refuse

though they had desired a King, but despised *Saul*, and would not make any ^k Presents to him; which *Saul* observed, but very prudently at that Time ^lcon-
niv'd at it.

refuse him; desiring what they had not, and despising what they had. They do not express their Contempt of him by Name, but do it worse in a more general way, saying *v. 27. Shall He save us?*

^k *Presents.* Presenting the King with Gifts was one way of recognizing him. The *Chaldee Paraphrase* says, They came not to salute him, which is the same thing; for the first Salutation offer'd to a King was always attended with Presents, which Presents carried with them a Sign of Peace and Friendship, of Congratulation and Joy, and of Subjection and Obedience. It was a general Custom,

and still continues among the Eastern Potentates, to bring Presents, there being no approaching them without.

^l *Connived.* The *Hebrew* says he was deaf, that is, seemed or pretended not to hear. In which he was very politick, being unwilling to begin his Reign with any Tumult, which his just Resentment of such an Affront might have occasion'd: If he had taken any Notice of the Affront, and not revenged it, he had shewn himself mean spirited, and if he had resented it, the People might have been apt to charge him with Severity and Cruelty.

The End of the First Volume.



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